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# LIGUORIAN

NOVEMBER, 1956

Criticizing the Clergy

What's Wrong with  
High School Proms?

Save Christmas for Christ!

The Police and  
the Third Degree



YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH,

AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.



# THE Liguorian

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and to All That  
Brings Happiness to  
Human Beings*

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THE LIGUORIAN IS INDEXED  
IN THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX

THE LIGUORIAN

LIGUORI, MO.

# CRITICIZING *the* CLERGY

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

Catholics sometimes fall into the habit of tale-bearing and gossiping about priests almost as if there were no obligation covering this matter. Here is an outline of the moral law on this point for self-examination.

OF ALL the sins that can be committed against charity, one of the hardest to avoid and one that often does great spiritual harm, is that of criticizing members of the clergy. Even very loyal and fervent Catholics sometimes catch themselves joining in unkind conversations about a priest of their acquaintance, or one of whose faults or even sins they have heard.

This article will not make the foolish assumption that priests are all perfect, even though they are called by their vocation to strive to be so. It will not deny the undeniable fact that the actions of priests are sometimes objectively blameworthy, and as such will enter into the grim reckoning they will one day have to make before God. It is solely an effort to help Catholics examine their

conscience on the eighth commandment of God, as it applies specifically to criticism of their clergy.

THE eighth commandment, in general, forbids two great sins against charity. The first is detraction, which means unnecessarily revealing the secret but real sins of somebody else. Detraction is a mortal sin when 1) the revealing of the secret sin of another causes serious harm to his reputation; 2) when the sin revealed has been secret and unknown to most of the public; 3) when there is no grave reason for telling others about the sin.

A modified form of detraction (usually a venial sin) is gossip, which means talking unnecessarily about the small sins of others or about those that are already quite commonly known.

The second sin against charity prohibited by the eighth commandment is that of slander or calumny. This means telling evil lies about others; interpreting their secret motives as evil; putting out suspicions of evil in others as if they were proven facts; in short, defaming a person without clear evidence or grounds.

Detraction and slander are sins, first, because they injure the good name of a fellow human being, and secondly at times, because they do harm to the good order of society by breaking down respect for lawful authority and making obedience and even the practice of religion itself difficult for those who have heard the evil talk about others. Thus there is a principle concerning detraction and slander that may be worded as follows: the higher the office and dignity of the one whose reputation is assailed, the greater is the harm that is done by the evil talk, and the greater the sin that is committed.

THAT is why there is a special kind of malice attached to speaking evil about priests. They have the high and responsible office of administering to the spiritual needs of all the people of their parish or jurisdiction; in many things they represent the authority of the Church Christ founded in the world. To broadcast their faults, to express suspicions about their motives, to spread ever farther and farther ugly rumors about them, is obviously to make respect and obedience difficult for more and more people.

This does not mean that there is never a time and never a proper place to speak about the sins of a priest who is giving great scandal and doing great harm to the flock of Christ. Of such a time and such a place rules will be set down at the end of this article. Meanwhile, it is important that Catholics examine themselves on the various forms that criticism of members of the clergy can take, and, if they have been guilty of any that are sinful, take stern measures to avoid such sins in the future.

#### 1. HARMLESS CRITICISM

THERE are some things that may be said about a priest that do not in any way reflect on his good name, and do not make respect for the priest more difficult for others. Active priests occupy a prominent position before their people. Every member of their flock is interested in them. It is natural that certain characteristics of their appearance and ways of acting be noticed by their people, and commented on now and then amongst themselves.

Thus no harm is done when parishioners say to one another, about a new priest who has been assigned to their parish, that he is very bald, or not very good-looking, or quick in his actions, etc. Certainly too there would be little harm in commenting that a certain priest is a very nervous public speaker, or even a poor speaker, or a very shy person, so long as these are obvious and objective traits,



and the comment is not inspired by personal antipathy or ill-feeling.

## 2. CRITICISM OF METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION

NOT so harmless, and sometimes seriously injurious to the welfare of a parish, is that kind of criticism whereby an individual launches a kind of one-man campaign of condemnation against his pastor's method of administering his parish.

It is one of the facts of life that not all men, not even all priests with their years of training, are equally endowed with administrative ability. It is also a fact that the decisions of even the best administrators will often not find favor with certain individuals under their jurisdiction.

Not every disagreement of a parishioner with a pastor's policies or decisions constitutes really harmful criticism. A man can say: "I wish the pastor had built the church in a different place," or "I don't care for the type of architecture selected by the pastor," or "I wish we didn't have to have bingoes and carnivals in our parish," without showing or fostering rebellion against authority. Loyalty to one's priests does not exclude an occasional mild expression of difference of opinion or viewpoint on practical matters.

However, there are some Catholics who make their dissenting views a starting point for a crusade of constant criticism and rebellious talk. They don't like the way the collection is taken up, and they let everybody know it. They don't like the

hours assigned for confessions and Masses, and they nag about these matters to everybody they meet. They do their best to make the pastor appear to others as ignorant, imprudent, foolish and perhaps even idiotic, just because they disagree with the way he does things.

These persons do an immense amount of harm by their constant criticism, because it is bound to lessen the respect for the clergy of many of their listeners. Thus this sort of constant criticism, accompanied as it usually is, by the bad example of refusal to cooperate in any way with the pastor, can in due time become a mortal sin.

## 3. CRITICISM OF A PRIEST'S LOYALTY TO PRINCIPLE

SOME people criticize and vilify priests just because they have refused to compromise on the moral law or some essential precept of the Catholic Church.

Thus there are those who can say nothing that is too mean about a certain priest because he refused, as he was bound to do, to tell them that they might practice contraception and still receive the sacraments and count on getting to heaven. The priest may have been slightly at fault by being impatient, or curt, or unkind in his manner of rebuking the sinner, but essentially he was merely fulfilling his sacred obligation of upholding God's law.

So, too, some criticize priests who have refused to give them hope of annulment of a marriage that has turned sour, because there were ob-

vously no grounds for such an annulment.

Such Catholics are not hurting the priest; rather they are giving testimony to his loyalty to his calling. They are also making public their own rebellion against the laws of God, on fidelity to which their salvation depends.

#### 4. SPITEFUL CRITICISM

**P**RIESTS are called "to be all things to all men," within the framework of the laws of God and of His Church. But they are human beings, and in dealing with multitudes of people, they cannot escape hurting individuals now and then.

Like everybody else, priests are subject to sickness, fatigue, moods, mistakes of judgment. They may rebuke a person coming late to Sunday Mass without thinking that the person may have been the one in a hundred who had a good reason. They may express a bit of impatience with some fond mother's child, and thus incur the mother's wrath. They may choose the wrong approach for reminding a back-sliding parishioner of his duty of helping to support the parish.

Such incidents, and a hundred like them, have caused people to bear a grudge against a certain priest, and to express it often to others in unkind and injurious words. Very often it is persons who have been greatly at fault themselves who are most apt to nurse a grudge against a priest. This weakness takes its worst and most disastrous form when the offended Catholic stops

going to church, and perhaps even keeps his children away, because "Father was unkind to me."

#### 5. TALE-BEARING CRITICISM

**T**WO things contribute to make the tendency toward gossip and tale-bearing in human beings one of the most difficult of all temptations to resist. The first is curiosity about the faults and sins of others — the desire to know their failings; the second is the urge to be the first to break the bad news about somebody's sins to one who has not heard of them.

These tendencies are especially marked in regard to priests. This is understandable. All Catholics know some priests, at least those who serve in their own parish. All Catholics are interested in their priests, and, just because they would like to see them all perfect in every respect, they find that anything that makes a priest less than perfect is a matter of intense interest and news-value. So it is that many fall into the evil habit of tale-bearing about priests.

Such tale-bearing can be either detraction or slander. It is detraction when a Catholic who has found out through direct evidence or an unimpeachable source, about a secret sin committed by a priest, relates the fact to other persons who ordinarily could not have found out about it in any other way. If the secret sin of the priest was a mortal sin, it is a mortal sin of detraction for anyone to reveal it as a piece of gossip or news. Even if the secret sin of a

priest were a venial sin but public knowledge of which could do great harm to himself and to souls, it might be a mortal sin to publish this to others.

More often, however, most talking about the sins of priests is slanderous. The talker has no real evidence of the sins; he has only suspicions and underground rumors to go on. If he passes the news on to others, he takes the responsibility of relating what may really be a lie. If it is seriously damaging to the priest, it is a mortal sin for the one who spreads the tale; if it is slightly damaging, it is a venial sin for the one who makes it known.

**I**T IS not detraction or calumny for Catholics to talk sadly about priests who have publicly renounced living as priests by attempting marriage or by some other great crime, and whose stories have made the newspapers or in some other way become public knowledge. It is not a sin to talk about the public sins of others, so long as one does not use the public facts as a basis for evil comments and generalizations about other priests.

However much of the tale-bearing criticism about priests deals with matters that become commonly known only through the tale-bearers. They will have to render a strict account to God for the tremendous evil they have done. And when they ask forgiveness in the confessional, they are bound to promise to try to restore the good names of priests whom they have hurt by their tale-bearing.

## 6. ANTI-CLERICAL CRITICISM

**A**NTI-CLERICALISM is a technical name for a type of opposition to the Catholic Church that has always been evident in the world. It springs from a pride that detests the idea of recognizing in other men a religious authority that comes from God. In an effort to do away with such authority, anti-clerical men keep hammering away at the human frailties of the clergy; they make generalizations about the pope, bishops, priests, to the effect that they are all avaricious, political-minded, impure, worldly, etc. Their hope is that people will become so absorbed with the thought of the weaknesses of the clergy that they will refuse to accept Christ's clear command to His true Church: "He that hears you hears Me."

•

Almost ninety per cent of all anti-Catholic literature centers about anti-clericalism. Because so many books, pamphlets, leaflets and dodgers concentrate on condemning all Catholic clergymen, it is natural that some Catholics who foolishly read such books, or hear them quoted by others, become tainted with the same horrible disease. They hardly ever realize that they have been infected by the disease that corrupts the worst enemies of the Catholic Church.

So there are Catholics who do the devil's work by throwing out their snide remarks to anybody who will listen. "Priests are too rich." "Priests are only out after money." "Priests have Cadillacs and nice homes, and

don't do a thing for the poor." "Priests are hypocrites," etc., etc., etc. Logically, of course, they speak like fools, because, even though there are some worldly priests, for every one such there are many who are dedicated to Christ and their calling. Spiritually they do untold harm, because there will always be the weak and the ignorant who will accept their loud-mouthed generalizations as the truth. Morally, they are in a bad way, because it is hard to see how faith can long survive in their souls.

## 7. JUSTIFIED CRITICISM

**I**S IT ever the duty of a Catholic to relate the sins of a priest to another? Is it ever lawful to do so? The answer of course is yes. Every priest who has made a study of moral theology knows that the obligations of fraternal charity include that of averting or putting a stop to real and great scandal being given to the flock of Christ. Once in a while this duty can be fulfilled only by making known the sins of a priest in the proper place and to the proper authority.

This principle is not a blanket approbation of every conceivable kind of tattle-taling on the part of lay-Catholics, to their chancery or bishop. It is hedged in by very definite rules. Before there is any obligation whatsoever, these conditions must be present.

1) There must be real scandal, resulting from real and serious sins. This condition is not present because a parishioner does not like the way a

pastor preaches, or runs his parish, or operates his school. It is not present when a parishioner feels he has been slighted by his pastor in some minor matter.

2) There must be real, objective evidence of the sins and of the scandal. Not rumor or hearsay or suspicion, but evidence, or, at least solid and trustworthy authority.

3) There must be perfect willingness to stand personally behind the revelation of the sins and the scandal. Anonymous telephone calls or letters are not deemed worthy of consideration in a matter so important as this, and those who use them are considered suspect themselves. Unless a Catholic is willing to appear in person and make his charges, or sign a sworn statement of his evidence, he cannot be taken too seriously. At the same time, when serious sins are causing real scandal, human respect or fear should not deter a conscientious Catholic from performing this difficult but important duty of charity.

It is not wrong for a Catholic to speak confidentially to a trusted confessor or spiritual director about something pertaining to the sins of other priests. In fact, this is the best way to obtain spiritual guidance as to whether there is present any obligation of charity.

## CONCLUSION

**D**ESPITE their lofty vocation, priests remain human. They have to save their own souls, and, like everybody else, can choose to lose them. Apart from that terrify-

ing possibility, the faithful will always see some faults in their priests, or will have reason to be resentful toward them at times. That is where the merit of obedience comes in. God promised infallible guidance to His Church, grace and salvation through the Mass and the sacraments and prayer; He did not promise that all His priests would be saints and geniuses at the same time.

It remains true, however, that the holier priests are, the holier will be their flocks. That is why one of the most important modern crusades is that of prayer for holy priests, marked especially by the reception of Holy Communion on "Priests' Saturday," the Saturday after the first Friday of the month. If a dozen Catholics who read these lines will join in that crusade, besides trying to practice the charity of Christ toward all priests, this article will have accomplished great things for God and souls.



Take a piece of wax, a piece of meat, some sand, some clay and some shavings and put them on the fire. Each is being acted upon by the same agent, yet the wax melts, the meat fries, the sand dries up, the clay hardens and the shavings blaze. Just so, under the influence of identical circumstances and environment, one man becomes stronger, another weaker, and another withers away.

*Optimist Club*

November, 1956

## PRAYER FOR MOTORISTS

O heavenly Father, who knowest well our limitations, send forth Thy spirit to stress the tremendous responsibility of the steering wheel in our hands. Remind us, before starting the motor, too often an engine of sudden death, to make the sign of the cross, so that the trip may begin with Thy blessing and by it be happily ended.

Sharpen our wits to keep our eyes on the road, ever mindful that the safety of human lives — so very precious in Thy sight — depends on our alertness and sobriety. Enlighten us to drive with patience, vigilance and consideration for others in cars and on foot.

O dearest Virgin Mother, ask St. Christopher, patron of travel, to see us safely on our way, through Thy divine Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Bishop Charles Buddy*



The following is an editorial from an old issue of the *Boston Globe*. It was printed in a former *LIGUORIAN* and is repeated by request for All Souls' Day.

The spirits of the beloved dead are burnished dials that count us none but sunny hours; they are a radiance that streams on us as we go about daily tasks, cheering and invigorating like strong sunshine. Is this death? What do they seem to say to the living on All Souls' Day?

"Think on us and make good use of what remains to you of life. Infinitely precious is the stuff of hours and minutes. Do not waste it on hate and fear. Love, for love is eternal life. Live that life while time is yet yours, strengthened by us whom you hold in loving memory. For death is but an altar rail at the communion of souls."

# Code of Catholic Conduct

## Coming on Time

Ernest F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

**T**HERE are few things that are more distressing to Our Lord up there in His tabernacle than the sight of people coming in late for Mass on Sunday.

Of course some people come late for everything. If they go to the movies, they arrive late; if they go to a ball game, they arrive late; if they go to catch a bus, they arrive late. Naturally they come late for Mass. The Lord is not too worried about their coming late for movies and ball games. But He does not like their coming late for Mass. Why?

**I**T IS a sign of disrespect.

It would be disrespect on the part of an ordinary citizen if through laziness or carelessness he came late for an important date he had with the president of the United States. Probably he would never get another date. Much greater disrespect is shown when an ordinary creature keeps the Creator waiting because of culpable tardiness. Our Lord does not like it.

**I**T IS disobedience.

Our Lord's voice on earth is His Church. The Church commands her children to come on time for Mass on Sunday. She says that if they refuse to obey her in this matter, they commit a venial sin. If their tardiness causes them to come so late that they miss the *offertory* of the Mass, they commit a mortal sin. Otherwise it is a

venial sin of disobedience. Our Lord does not like disobedience.

**I**T IS a forfeiting of graces.

The prayers said at the beginning of Mass are powerful and helpful prayers. Many graces are granted the people because of them. But if the people are not present, the graces are forfeited. Yet, these may be the very graces that the people need in order to conquer an especially difficult temptation that is going to attack them in the near future. Surely Our Lord does not like it if through their own fault they deprive themselves of these helps.

Coming late for Mass on Sunday is like coming late for the crucifixion of Our Lord on Mount Calvary. The Mass is the mystical repetition and continuation of Our Lord's death on the cross. Is it possible to imagine a Christian being invited to the scene of Our Lord's death in order to give Our Lord solace in His last moments but, because of a desire to have a few extra minutes of sleep, arriving at the top of the hill only after the crucifixion has taken place?

**T**HAT'S the case of the Catholic who comes late, even though it be only a few minutes late, to Sunday Mass. Definitely Our Lord doesn't like it. He may some day strike with a heavy hand because of it. And if that happens to any late-comer to Mass, let him not ask protestingly, "What have I done to deserve this?"

# Are You Happy?

*Resignation or acceptance of God's plan for our life is really an easy virtue.*

*Here are some hints to help in its practice.*

HARRY S. SMITH, C.S.S.R.

**P**ERIODICALLY, someone comes up with a new formula for happiness.

If you watch television, you will discover that your happiness depends entirely on cosmetics — liquids and creams and sprays that make your hair glossy, your skin silky, your eyes radiant, your teeth pearly, your breath sweet and your whole body redolent of jasmine or just antiseptic clean.

If you read the papers, you will be persuaded to believe that your happiness depends on financial security and in having insurance, bonds, stocks and investments that bring in a steady flow of money.

If you page through current, secular magazines, you'll find that happiness will depend on your general health, which means having regular physical examinations — cancer, you know — using only the most modern medicines and anti-biotics, keeping your weight down, eating vitamin-packed food, but most of all, in being happily married and above everything else, in LOVE, either legitimately or illegitimately.

**I**F YOU listen to people they will convince you that happiness depends on pleasure. You must go

places, do things, see all you can, enjoy sex, leisure, good company, music, plays, liquor and tobacco (plenty of both), dancing, entertainment and, by all means, have little work to do, with no responsibility attached and plenty of money in your pocket. Yet the fathers of our country, where all these wonderful things can be obtained by almost anyone, were wise enough to know that happiness is a rare thing in this life and granted us only the right to the pursuit thereof.

## FORMULA OF THE SAINTS

**T**HE saints, however, had a different idea, and they bequeathed to us a formula that was time-tried and true and so simple it almost seems inane. They have told us, and proved too, that happiness on this earth can be obtained very easily through resignation and conformity to the will of God.

It is all very elementary; it consists in a state of mind that is dictated by truth and very simple reasoning. It goes like this. God is running the world. He must, because He made it, and if He left us alone we would confound things terribly. We manage to do a pretty good job of



messing things up even with God's supervision and direction of our world. Now God is omniscient; He knows everything, past, present and future. He must, because otherwise He would not be God. He has a great master plan for the world and for souls in it and even though we have our own free will, God still works out His plan despite our mistakes and sins and stupid blundering. So, for peace of mind and happiness of soul, why not let Him run the show and try to see His will and divine plan in everything that happens, because it IS His will anyway.

**I**F YOU are old enough, you can look back and see how God has taken untoward and even distressing circumstances in your life and, over a period of time, made them work out for your happiness and welfare. Whenever we have a war everyone says: "Why must this happen?" Yet, give God a chance and He will bring great good out of the evil of war. Some of our greatest scientific, medical and political benefits have come as by-products of war; but you've got to give Him time; maybe centuries.

Perhaps some great tragedy or shocking experience has happened to you. Immediately you ask: "Why? Why must this happen to me?" At the instant you cannot understand it and are prone to question the infinite wisdom of God; but over a period of years you can see how He has allowed these apparent evils to come to you, not only to save you from future mistakes that would be far

worse but also to condition you for future blessings and happiness.

#### HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON US

**Y**OU SEE, in a certain sense all unhappiness in our lives is of our own making. We are almost diabolically proud of our own free will and we love to use it, but sometimes, like Lucifer, we go too far and oppose God's will and plan and that's when unhappiness walks in, as it did when hell was created and when the gates of the Garden of Eden slammed shut. We also like to superimpose our will over the will of God. We plan, scheme, connive and work things out to suit ourselves and then try to force the hand of God to endorse our ideas; and yet what He wants might be entirely different from what we are striving to attain.

The saints did it differently. First, they resigned themselves to God's will in everything. Now, that doesn't mean that they sat down comfortably in the shade and waited for pleasant things to happen. No, they went about their work and duties as best they could; they obeyed their rules and superiors, knowing that God rewards obedience to lawful authority even though the one exercising it might have been unworthy, sinful, selfish or stupid. No matter what happened to them they accepted it as part of God's over-all plan for them.

When St. Gerard Majella was rebuked and punished by St. Alphonsus, his superior, for something that he had not done, even though he was sinless and innocent of the ac-



cusation and could have honestly defended himself, he kept silence, suffered the terrible humiliation and embarrassment and accepted it with resignation to God's will.

**WE KNOW** how God's plan worked out later on. Gerard was not only vindicated but became a great saint. Alphonsus himself must have learned the great lesson of resignation because his writings are spiced with beautiful statements of humility and submission to the will of God. Witness his beautiful *Stations of the Cross* where he repeats these words at every station, "Do with me as Thou wilt."

The saints, of course, went a little further than mere resignation. You see, they were deeply and completely in love with God. So, driven by love, they had to find out what God really had in mind for them to do. Therefore they accepted and cooperated with all the guiding graces God gave them. They prepared themselves to become efficient tools in the hand of God; they studied, they worked, they prayed and disciplined themselves; they suffered, sacrificed and subdued their passions, so that whenever God indicated by lawful authority what He wanted of them, they were ready to become instruments by which His divine plan was accomplished. They lived, thought and breathed the will of God in everything and that's why the saints were all happy people and could spread happiness around them because their wills and God's will were one.

#### WE CAN DO THE SAME

**NOW**, if we could capture that same attitude and let Him run our lives, think how much more happiness would be ours. But we want to manage our lives in our own way and whenever things go contrary to our own wills, we ask the great unanswerable question, "Why?"

Suppose a young wife and husband lose their first child either through stillbirth, miscarriage or death in infancy. They grieve and ask: "Why must this happen to us?" God has the answer but He won't tell. Maybe if the child had lived it would have been an idiot or deformed or perhaps would have led an evil life and lost its soul. Or if the child lives and is afflicted in some way they again ask, "Why?" Maybe God wants the parents to work out their salvation through a life of sacrifice and devotion to the little invalid.

Suppose a lovely young girl in a moment of foolishness or frantic frustration marries the wrong man; or a fine young man, unbalanced by emotion, marries the wrong woman. The other party turns out to be a drunkard, unfaithful, worthless or maybe a criminal. All their dreams of marital bliss disappear like smoke in a wind, and they are condemned to an unfortunate existence. Immediately they ask, "Why? Why can't I get a divorce and build a happy life for myself?" God has the answer but He won't tell them because He wants them to conform to His will and be happy despite the unbearable situa-

tion in which they have to spend their lives.

**S**UPPOSE all our life we have been working and striving to attain a certain goal; it may have been an honor we desire, or financial security, or just a comfortable situation in life, and suddenly, just when the prize is within our grasp, something happens and it all ends in failure. Our castles collapse and come tumbling down around our head. What attitude should we take? The saints would say, "Thy will be done," and would readjust their minds and wills to God's plan. Our attitude would be to revolt, to complain and to set about whipping things back in the form our own will dictates. But meanwhile there is no happiness in our life, no peace of mind and surely no contentment or ease of living.

Understanding the virtues of resignation and conformity to God's will we can understand why a man like St. Benedict Labre was satisfied to live as a tramp, why St. Francis of Assisi begged for his daily bread, why a man like St. Clement Hofbauer bore the insult of being spat upon when he begged for his orphans.

#### HAPPINESS MEANS WANTING WHAT GOD WANTS

**I**T IS interesting to analyze people who complain of being unhappy and not getting any *breaks* in life. A man and wife may have all the material comforts this life can offer but they are intensely unhappy. The reason is that God wants them to have children and give their lives a pur-

pose, but they don't want what God wants. Or perhaps, they have "a boy for you and a girl for me" and then not only tell God, "that's enough," but even tie His creative hands by using methods of artificial birth-prevention. But let almighty God take back a life that He has entrusted to them and they turn against Him like maddened beasts.

Perhaps a person who is highly educated and very successful decides he doesn't need religion any more; he stops attending holy Mass on Sundays, does not receive the sacraments and sometimes even blames God's priests for his conduct because it is an easy way to quiet his troubled conscience. It's an old escape practiced even by the Jews who had a habit of killing their prophets. The man is unhappy and miserable and he knows why, but instead of resigning himself to God's will and obeying God's laws he takes to drink or drugs or both and sinks into the depths of misery and despair.

Or, maybe someone, eaten up with jealousy, sets about deliberately to ruin another's reputation, or by lies and detraction is able to harm the one of whom he is jealous. His life becomes unbearably unhappy, his conscience rebukes him and he approaches the fringe of insanity. He wonders why his life is so disturbed, so unpeaceful, so unhappy. The answer is simple. God doesn't want him to do all these things—in fact God made laws forbidding them—but he is acting contrary to the will of God. And when we oppose God,

which we do in every sin we commit, we cannot be happy.

**R**ESIGNATION is an easy virtue and makes for easy living. It relieves our mind of stress and strain and develops a deep trust in the wisdom and providence of God. All it means is placing our will in the hands of God, letting Him use us as He wills and cooperating with His laws, His lights and His graces.

It keeps our mind at ease, our heart quiet and peaceful; it begets satisfaction with our state in life and gives us a cozy feeling of security; it helps us regulate our desires and appetites and strengthens us to bear our sufferings and failures bravely.

Meanwhile our heart sings a song of happiness like the heart of our Blessed Lady whose formula for happiness was this: "Be it done unto me according to Thy word."

### *An Hour for Humility*

When the nation's second nuclear-powered submarine — the *USS Seawolf* — was launched recently, a prayer for peace in this atomic age was given by Father (Lt. Cmdr.) Paul F. Bradley, Catholic Chaplain at the U.S. Submarine Base at Groton.

"Almighty God:

"It would be a foolish thing for us to be other than simple and brief in the epochal circumstances under which we are here assembled. We wish to ask Thy blessing on forces which we do not yet fully comprehend. It is an hour for prayer, not rhetoric, for humility not hauteur.

"We have seen the power of Thy creation in our days, O God. We have felt the earth shrug and have seen whole cities shudder and slip into rubble. We have seen lightning leap from angry skies to incinerate man and his works. We have seen bacteria, so minute as to challenge the most discerning lens, snowball into pain and plague and death. We have heard the volcano rumble and seen it spew out destruction. We have seen the forces of nature caught in test tubes and have seen her metals hammered into blades and barrels and bombs in man's own plan and pattern of pain.

"Today, O God, we ask You to look down on us with patience and compassion. This craft, this *Seawolf*, this capsule contrived of steel and secret structure, holds within its bulkheads the most awful culmination that man has yet derived from the potentials that Your creative hand pressed into the bins and closets of nature. We are awed and chastened, O God, but we are not frightened so long as we dedicate this craft and the fearful forces that propel it to Thy glory, to the protection of man's rights, to peace for all men. We acknowledge that all Thy gifts are good, and only by man's will can be bent to man's sorrow.

"Therefore, we reverently ask Thee, O God of both the atom's laws and man's reason, to bless and guide to life more abundant. To peace — because the awful alternative is the end of all life. Amen."

Mathias Huber, C.S.S.R.

# Little Lessons in Catholic Living

## Give Thanks to God!

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**W**HEN we receive some great and special favor from God we find it rather easy to be grateful to Him, at least for a time. But there are some things to which we grow so accustomed that our appreciation of them grows dull, and we forget to be grateful. The sunlight, the air we breathe, the water we drink, the clothes we wear and the food we eat, our two feet and hands, our eyes, our ability to walk and move about — they are all gifts of God, and for them God deserves our thanks.

But does God really expect thanks and gratitude for these little things? Our Lord teaches us that He does.

He worked a great miracle one day, the miracle of feeding several thousand people on a few loaves of bread. The Gospel says: "Taking the seven loaves, He gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples to distribute." Think about that. He was God. He was the Lord of all. He

was about to perform a miracle. Yet He paused long enough to teach the lesson of gratitude. He paused to give thanks for a few loaves of bread, teaching us by example that we ought to give thanks for all things, the little as well as the great.

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**A**GAIN, at the Last Supper, we read that Christ took bread, raised His eyes to heaven and gave thanks. Our Lord gave thanks very simply and for very simple things.

He showed us, too, that He expected gratitude from others. You remember when He cured the ten men of leprosy, He sent them to show themselves to the priest as the law required. But when the cure had taken place, only one man came back to thank Him. "Were not ten made clean?" He asked sorrowfully. "Where are the other nine?" What disappointment there must have been in His heart because of the thoughtless ingratitude of these men!

Make a quick check. Does your memory tell you that you have learned the lesson of gratitude which Our

Saviour taught? Do you give pleasure to the heart of God by thanking Him always for the benefits you have received from Him? And what have you received?

You have received countless benefits for body and soul. You can easily count up the good things He has given you for the life of your body; but do you remember the things He has done for the life of your soul?

He created your soul immortal, made it to live with Him forever. He gave heaven back to you when it had been lost by the sin of Adam and perhaps again and again by sins of your own, by dying for you upon the cross. He gave you the sacraments to assist you at all times during life. He gave Himself in Holy Communion.

**H**E has given you His own Blessed Mother Mary to be your mother and to pray for you and to help you always as only a mother can help her children. He has given each one of you a guardian angel; He has given you the saints to be your patrons and to pray for you in all your needs. He has given you the privilege and the honor to pray, to come to Him and to ask Him for the things you need.

How do you thank God for all these gifts? Are you one of the nine?

See how simple it is. When you rise in the morning, how do you say your morning prayers? Are they merely so many motions of your lips or do they spring alive from the faith in your heart? How easy it is to say with real meaning, "My God, I thank You for having kept me safe during the past night. I thank You for all the opportunities for doing good which this day is bringing me."

How do you say your prayers after meals? Most Catholics still pray before meals; they even teach their little children to lead the prayer before dinner. But what has happened to the wonderful privilege we enjoy of saying after the meal, "Thanks, dear God, for the mashed potatoes and the roast beef?"

**P**EOPLE teach their children to say thanks when they receive any gift at all; people are punctilious in thanking their host and hostess for the dinner they enjoyed; but people, more and more, are slipping into the thoughtless practice of just gradually dissolving, as a group, and sliding away from the dinner table without so much as saying a word of thanks to God.

Check those prayers after meals! Your prayer can be so short and simple as, "Thanks, God, for the ham and eggs!" and still be an expression of real gratitude.

Yes, God wants our gratitude, but He is satisfied with simple words of thanks. You saw, how in the Gospel story, He gave thanks very simply. His example is a lesson for us. God does not expect us to spend long hours on our knees, thanking Him for favors received. He does not want many words or many repetitions of the same words. He wants our gratitude to come straight from our heart, genuine and sincere and childlike.

Thanksgiving Day is coming along at the end of November. But we don't have to wait for any special day to give thanks to God. Thanksgiving Day is a day for giving special thanks to God, but every day is a special day for giving childlike thanks to God, Our Father.

Edward Finnegan, C.S.S.R.

# The Poor Souls and You

Without reminders like this we might forget the silent sufferers in purgatory completely.

A FEW days ago a young woman sat down near me in the lobby of Our Lady of Victory Hospital. Nervously she opened *The Saturday Evening Post*, tried to read a few lines, then closed it again. She twisted the magazine in her hands for a few minutes, then made another futile attempt at reading. After closing it this time, she got up and walked to the registrar's desk.

I couldn't hear what she said, but there was no need to: the same scene takes place in every hospital day after day. Maybe her husband was sick, maybe her young son. What she wanted to know was, "Isn't there anything I can do? Anything?"

## WE WANT TO HELP OTHERS

BUT hospital lobbies are not the only setting for such a display of the human longing and desire to help others. You've known people who have given up chances of success to care for aging parents; you've heard of a mother spending sleepless nights nursing a fever away from her baby's brow. Maybe you've done something similar many times. The urge to help the helpless is in man's blood. You find examples of it in every edition of the news.

Why is it then, that you act so differently toward the poor souls? You go to such extremes to help your sick loved ones and yet give the poor souls hardly a thought. They are your loved ones, you know. And they can't help themselves. They need you.

And they do suffer . . .

None of us escape loneliness. Even centuries ago, when Mary wept beneath the cross, loneliness was in the world. Today it flies about stinging whom it wishes,

when it wishes. From the old man standing at the edge of his wife's grave, to the mother waving goodbye to an army-bound son; no one escapes.

But all of that, even the worst of it, is nothing compared to the loneliness in purgatory. After a life of wandering and confusion, the soul in purgatory finally realizes that what he sought all along was God. It was for Him that he was made. He discovers that the beautiful things he had known, cherry blossoms in spring, the first snow, the warmth of a Christmas tree, his wife and children — all of these are only faint reflections of the beauty of God. Now the soul in purgatory wants only God. But God cannot yet be possessed.

**A**ND at last he knows what real love is. Love with no sorrow attached, no anxiety. Love without ending. Love surpassing his love for his wife, his children, parents, friends, country, all combined. . . . Only to run to the feet of his God — there to satisfy the desire that pounds within him! But no, he cannot. He must stay where he is and suffer — to atone for his sins.

More than any sick loved ones, he is helpless. His own pleadings are of no avail. He calls to you, for by a wonderful act of God's mercy, you can help him.

#### EASY WAYS TO HELP THE POOR SOULS

**Y**OU don't have to go out of your way to help him. "My

Jesus, mercy!" is such a short prayer, but it might be enough to free a poor soul. Or you can offer your Communions for them. Our Lord comes to listen to your wants. Mention the poor souls; He will hear you. You have the Mass, too. One Mass, if God so willed it, would be enough to clear purgatory for all eternity. If your family says the family rosary, why not resurrect the old custom of saying a sixth decade for the poor souls?

Then there is the heroic act of charity. This form of help is no further away than your will. You perform it by willing that all the indulgences you gain, all the satisfactory value of your good works, and all the prayers offered for you after death be applied to the souls in purgatory. As a reward for your charity, the Church grants you a plenary indulgence every time you receive Communion and pray for the intention of the Pope, and another for every time you hear Mass on Monday and fulfill the usual conditions.

How is it, then, that you forget them? You know that they depend on you for help — help often costing you no more effort than a whisper. What has happened to the inborn urge to help your loved ones? The poor souls *are* your loved ones! Christ, by suffering for all, has bound you close together. You have the same goal, the same Saviour — all the things that really matter in life, you have in common. And it is with them,



please God, you will spend eternity. How is it, then, that you forget them? Are you so evil, so inhuman?

#### WHY WE FORGET

**N**O, of course not. There are reasons why you don't think of the poor souls. Their suffering is of a special type. Even the most patient of your loved ones on earth can't continually hide their sufferings. But you never hear a sound from the poor souls. They suffer in complete silence and if someone didn't remind you, you would be liable to forget these silent sufferers completely. And then, even if some of their sighs did drift into the world around you, they would soon be lost in the rumble of your everyday lives. When there are bills to be paid, families to be fed, TV to be watched, the sigh of a poor soul stands small chance of being heard. No, you're not inhuman; you have good reason for forgetting the poor souls.

But you don't want to leave it there, do you? There's too much suffering involved, too much need for help, to let it go at that. Especially since you can find ways of remembering if you want to.

How about using the alarm clock as a reminder? Yes, the alarm clock. Instead of groaning: "Oh, no!" (or something more pedestrian) when the Little Ben shatters your carefree dreams, why not say: "My Jesus, mercy?"

Or if you are a housewife, why not answer the doorbell with a short whispered prayer?

And you teen-agers whose classes are a complete bore (or so you think) — make them remind you that teen-agers in purgatory are suffering pains a thousand times greater than yours. Perhaps a little effort at attention on your part will mean heaven for one of them.

There are a thousand ways of making yourself remember. Just stop and think for a moment. Choose something personal — something you do every day — something that will easily remind you of them. Don't settle on something difficult, unless you know you can carry it through. That's one of the devil's best tricks — especially against people with good intentions. It's something big today, he knows, but next month it will be a burden — pretty soon you'll be doing nothing at all.

#### YOUR REWARD

**T**HE poor souls will never forget your kindness. In purgatory some day you'll be asking yourself: "How'd I get into this mess?" And you'll just be settling down to take the punishment you deserve, when off to heaven you'll be carried, to the arms of the Love you've sought all your life. There you will see a few faces smiling at you (maybe even a crowd of them), and you'll know why your purgatory was shortened. These souls, the closest of your loved ones, will have repaid a debt by begging God to grant you the freedom you gained for them.



# Problems of Professional People

## The Police and the Third Degree

**P**ROBLEM: I am a police officer, and at times we are expected to get a confession from a person whom we know to be guilty of some serious crime. We get orders to "treat him rough" in conducting this "third degree." I have qualms of conscience about this procedure, though it is an undeniable fact that in this way the police frequently obtain evidence that will bring about the conviction, not only of the prisoner they are working on, but also of his confederates and helpers. What is to be said of the morality of the "third degree" as practiced by the police?

**S**OLUTION: I believe that every decent citizen feels a sense of sympathy with police officers who have arrested a person who they are sure has committed some grave crime, such as murder, kidnapping, the sale of narcotics, etc., but who will not admit his guilt until they have worn him down by the "third degree." In this way a dangerous crime ring may be discovered and broken up, and the public protected from much harm to life and property.

However, we must not let our feelings lead us astray. It is a principle of our civil law, as well as a principle of Catholic theology, that a person is to be treated as innocent in our tribunals of justice until he is proved guilty. The police have the right to arrest and to imprison persons who have certainly done wrong or are suspected of having done wrong. But the police have no judiciary power. They have no right to declare a person guilty before the law. They may, indeed, try to secure a confession from one they are sure is

guilty, so that it may be used in court; but in trying to obtain such a confession they are limited both by the law of the land and by the law of God in the measures they may legitimately employ. A bad means may never be employed even to obtain a most beneficial end.

**T**O BE more specific, the police officer who beats a suspected prisoner in order to extort a confession is doing wrong. It is also wrong for the police to employ measures which amount to torture — for example, to keep a prisoner awake for 20 or 25 hours under the strong glare of electric lights, repeating questions, shouting at him, etc. To refuse to give him food and drink for a long period is also sinful. At most, the police could question a prisoner for several hours, when they are sure he is guilty, in the hope that they will trip him in his answers and thus lead him to confess his crime.

It has happened that an innocent person has suffered barbaric tortures at the hands of the police in the exercise of the "third degree." We must not forget that the torturing of prisoners in order to force them to confess crimes they have not committed is one of the favorite methods of the Communists in the lands behind the Iron Curtain. Hence, the police in our land who use brutal tactics in administering the "third degree" are imitating those who are the worst enemies of America at the present time.

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# SAVE CHRISTMAS FOR CHRIST

*Organized efforts are being made to reduce the celebration of Christmas to the level of a pagan or fairy-tale production. Here are some suggestions about saving the feast of Christmas for Christ.*

Ernest F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

**T**O US it seems most irrational and contradictory for American people to leave CHRIST in the word, "Christmas," and at the same time to remove CHRIST from the celebration of Christmas. It's like being satisfied at the moment of creation with only bones when one might just as easily be fixed up with a body as well as with a network of bones. If Christ is not removed from the word "Christmas," Christ should not be removed from the celebration of Christmas.

People who do not believe either in Christ or in Christmas do wrong in celebrating Christmas only for the purpose of making a lot of money. It is a terrifying sight — people capitalizing on Christ. They belong to

the buyers and sellers in the temple whom Christ ran out with whips and scorching words. They are the direct descendants of the hypocrites of Christ's day whom Christ called a brood of vipers, whited sepulchres and many other equally unflattering names.

Nor should people make a pagan feast out of Christmas. They do this when their thoughts dwell only on the material aspect of the day — food, drink, what they will receive in gifts, a long holiday from work, a family reunion, and so forth. They also do this when they place great emphasis on Christmas trees, hung-up stockings, mistletoe and brightly colored decorations, with very little emphasis on Christ and the crib in which Christ on Christmas day was born.

**S**PECIFICALLY who are the men and women and children who keep Christ in the word, "Christmas," and at the same time remove Christ from the celebration of Christmas? One doesn't have to look very far to find them. They are on every level of American society.

They are on the intellectual and educational level.

The public school is one such example. Some of the people who exert influence on the public school have so high a horror of anything that savors of a union of Church and state that they feel a cold chill in the very marrow of their bones at the mere mention or suggestion of the children in the classrooms reenacting the Christmas story or hanging up paper posters on which are painted angels and shepherds and the other famous characters of the cave and the crib.

To allow the children to externalize their belief in the Christmas story is, they say, the favoring of the Christian religion over the non-Christian religions. This is anathema. This is un-American. Down with the angels! Away with the shepherds! Silence to the voices that persist in singing, "Peace on earth to men of good will!"

We do not exaggerate.

**T**HE magazine *Committee Reporter*, which is the journal of a large segment of the secularists of the country, reports that the drive to abolish the observance of Christmas in the public schools failed in 1955 because it got underway too late. Once the holly is hung and the wreaths placed in the windows and the spiritual significance of Christmas allowed to take over the minds of the people, one does not get very far in keeping the schools free from entanglements with Church celebrations and ceremonies concerning the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas be-

gets emotion. Emotion is most difficult to fight. The victory of the unspiritual Christmas over the spiritual Christmas must be won before emotion has the opportunity to wield her influence.

In 1956, the *Committee Reporter* continues, it is going to be different. The drive to abolish all *Christian* Christmas observance in the public schools started in July.

This is a clear example of CHRIST being kept in the word, "CHRISTMAS," but cut out of the observance of Christmas. The celebration of Christmas for the children in the public schools will be a sort of pagan or fairy-tale celebration, with Christmas trees and Santa Clauses right and left, but with no cribs and Infants, with no soft strains of *Silent Night* and *Adeste Fideles*. The children will even be allowed to greet each other with the age old salutation, "Merry Christmas," but they will not be allowed to learn the inner meaning of the joyous words, "Merry Christmas." That is, if the secularists have their way.

How can this situation of a Christless Christmas for the little children in the schools be repaired?

**T**HERE is no problem in the Catholic schools. The sisters, by visual aids, by word of mouth, by magazines and books, by carefully selected prayers teach the children what the 25th of December really means. They set up the real reason for the celebration of Christmas. In doing that, they make Christmas all the more enjoyable for the children.

For example. In some Catholic schools the preparation for Christmas begins in a very specific manner at the beginning of the first week of Advent, which, of course, is approximately four weeks before Christmas day. During the first week of Advent the children erect a small stable in one of the corners of the classrooms. The second week they place a star over the stable. The third week they bring in the shepherds and station them on the paths that lead to the stable. The fourth week they bring in the Infant Jesus, The Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph.

While all this is going on, Sister explains to the children the meaning of the stable and the star and the shepherds and the Holy Family. Thus, the lesson of Christmas is driven home not only by the telling of the story but also by the acting out of the story. It is a gradual process, giving the children a chance mentally and spiritually to digest the great mystery of Christmas. Would anybody say that the children are less American because such a thing is allowed to be done within the walls of a classroom?

**P**ERHAPS the public school cannot go as far as the Catholic school. There are children in the public schools who have been told that Christ is of no importance in the affairs of the world. The parents of these children do not want their offspring to believe in Christ. They have handed down their unbelief to their children.

In spite of what these people hold and teach their children to hold,

Christ was as great a man as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Nobody who has studied the influence of Christ on the history of the world can deny that, no matter what his religion or lack of religion. Why then should there be reluctance to celebrate Christ's birthday and no reluctance to celebrate Washington's and Lincoln's birthday?

There does not have to be a particular religious ceremony in the classroom of the public school, such as the Mass or the Communion service, when the teacher leads her children into an understanding of the birth of Christ. There need only be a retelling and if possible a reenacting of the facts. If the teacher is not allowed to make Christians out of non-Christians, she is at least allowed to tell the story of the great man who was born on Christmas and after whom the day takes its name. She is allowed to decorate in some small way her classroom as a sign of the happiness that her children should feel because of the coming into the world of so good and great a man as Christ. If she cannot do this, then she cannot be honest with her children in making anything of Christmas at all. She should forbid even the use of the expression, "Merry Christmas," within the walls of her classroom.

**O**THERS who keep the word CHRIST in the word, "Christmas," and at the same time remove CHRIST from the celebration of Christmas are some of the people of the business world.

A month before Christmas the stores of the city are filled with the Christian and pagan accoutrement of Christmas — reindeer, artificial snow, Santa Clauses, and so forth. Some of the stores will even go to the extent of displaying a crib and an infant and Mary and Joseph in one of the prominent show-windows. And the traditional carols will resound from the top to the bottom of these stores from Thanksgiving until late Christmas Eve.

What is the purpose of all this in the minds of the owners of the stores? To honor Christ? To bring out the real spirit of Christmas for the people? Perhaps. More probably, no. The motive behind the huge expenditures of money on the part of the business men to make people Christmas-conscious is, we fear, to make businessmen more wealthy.

This statement is not made without thought. It is known to everybody that as soon as the sales potentiality departs from Christmas, the decorations, the carols, the cribs and the caves depart too. The day after Christmas workmen are busy removing all vestiges of Christmas from counters and windows and departments.

The traditional and true time for celebrating Christmas is the few weeks *after* the Infant is born, not the month *before* the Infant is born. Whoever heard of a young father passing out cigars a month before his wife had her baby and then forgetting about the cigars entirely after the baby was born?

**T**HE Church celebrates Christmas from December 25 until the coming of the three kings on January 6 with special Masses, with beautiful hymns, with brightly colored vestments, with cribs and shepherds and angels. In fact, the crib and the shepherds and the angels are not even seen by the faithful until midnight Mass on Christmas day. Until then, a covering conceals the holy scene. It is only after the covering is removed that the celebrating begins. It is during the two weeks following Christmas that the sweetness of the Bethlehem story is savored by the people.

What can business men do in order to put Christ into the observance of Christmas as well as in the word, "Christmas?"

That is a very difficult question to answer. The reason is the difference in religious beliefs amongst business men. Many of the merchants of the country do not believe that Christ was God. Many of them are not followers of Christianity. Not a few of them are almost entirely ignorant of the significance of Christ's coming down to earth. Now is it possible for such men to put CHRIST into the observance of Christmas?

Perhaps their only approach to the problem is a negative one. Let them *not go all out* in their advertising and in their displaying of Christmas wares, even though it may mean that they will not make the great profit that otherwise they would. Decent people would hardly appreciate the actions of Christian businessmen if these businessmen

took the greatest Jewish or Protestant festival of the year and made it merely a means of making more money. If a businessman does not believe in Christ, let him not turn Christ into a money-changer. In so doing he will at least avoid the unsavory epithet of hypocrite.

**T**HE unbelieving merchant can do more than follow a negative program in his way of running his business at Christmas. In many instances he disbelieves in Christ because he knows nothing of Christ. He was so busy during his life building up his store and keeping his store a profit-making organization that he had no time for such unworldly things as a study of Christ and Christmas and Christianity. A man cannot serve two masters. If he wants to make money, he has to concentrate on money. All other interests must become secondary and incidental.

But now he is up against a problem. He is expected to promote Christmas and make money out of Christmas without his knowing the least thing about Christ who is the reason for Christmas. As an intelligent man he is disgusted by the thought. Why would it not be smart for him to make a study of Christ and of Christmas several months before the actual celebration of Christmas? If he is smart enough to make a success of his business, he is probably smart enough to grasp the significance of Christ and of Christianity and of Christmas.

If he goes to the proper source to make his study and if he is sincere in

it, he will be rewarded with information on the meaning and the destiny of man that he never had before. He will discover that all that he is and all that he can ever hope to be is in someway bound up with and in Christ. He will come to believe that Christmas is everything insofar as it is the day on which Christ came to earth with all the wonderful things that He possessed and which He intended to distribute to man. "Rejoice and be glad, for there is born to you a Saviour." These words will become the sentiment of his heart.

**H**E WILL return to his store and stock it high with all the things that people want to give to friend and relative on Christmas day in memory of Christ's giving Himself to the world on the first Christmas day. He will sell these things as cheaply as he can so that he won't have it on his conscience that he made an excessive profit on Christ. Christ took no price for Himself when He gave Himself to the world. The least the follower of Christ can do, if he be a merchant, is to take as small a profit as he can from the sale of things that are to be used to express the spirit of Christ.

He will do more than that.

He will refuse to have anything at all to do with those articles of merchandise that are an insult to Christ, to Christians and to Christianity. For example. He will not stock up on obscenities, even though they be in great demand by those who profess Christianity only in name and by those who do not know what Chris-

tianity is. Such obscenities are immoral books, many of them best sellers; immodest clothing for women, much of it in high style at the moment; suggestive pictures.

He will do what he can (if his business in any way touches on the matter) to introduce the right kind of Christmas greeting cards for the people to buy. In recent years many stores carried greeting cards that had absolutely no connection with Christmas. They might just as well have served any other holiday of the year. The honest and sincere businessman investigates until he finds the card that fits the day. In that way he will be making his contribution to the proper celebration of the birth of Our Lord.

If he does not know where he can find appropriate Christmas greeting cards, let him contact the priests of the neighborhood in which he lives. There are religious orders that deal in beautiful Christmas cards. The priests to whom he talks will tell him where these religious orders have their headquarters and how most easily he can contact them.

**O**F COURSE it goes without saying that a business man who has had a prosperous year should show his thanksgiving to God by being most generous to the poor. Christmas is the time to show this generosity. All that he has, came to him from God. The least that he can do now is to give as much as possible of that which he does not need back to God in the person of the

man or the woman who needs assistance.

**E**VEN on the family level sometimes Christ has very little to do with Christmas except to be a part of the word that singles out the 25th of December as a day of eating and feasting and exchanging gifts. But Christ is hardly the reason for the eating and the feasting and the exchanging of gifts. Such families are very strong for decorations and Christmas trees and stockings hung up for the visit of Santa Claus. If you were to ask the children of these families why the stockings are hung up and why the Christmas tree is put in the corner of the front room and decorated with all kinds of electric lights and tinsel and shining silvery and golden balls and why gifts are exchanged, they would not be able to tell you. Their whole attention has been directed to the material and the human side of Christmas and not to the spiritual and supernatural side of Christmas. They have not learned what the spirit of Christmas really is.

What is the spirit of Christmas? And how can parents warm their children with this spirit?

The spirit of Christmas is a spirit of faith. The Infant Jesus came on earth not to teach people all the tricks of human prosperity but rather to point out to them the road to heaven. Human prosperity will pass away. Heaven will never pass away.

So, parents should use the four weeks of Advent preceding Christmas to teach their children the fool-



ishness of putting success and wealth and fame above going to heaven. They have the example of the Infant Jesus and the circumstances of His first appearance upon this earth to illustrate their teaching. Our Lord was the Master of heaven and earth. He could have had anything He wanted at the moment of His birth. Yet, He preferred to come in poverty and cold and abandonment in order to show His children by His own example that comfort and the nice things the world can offer are not necessarily the important things at all.

**T**HE spirit of Christmas is the spirit of charity. The Infant Jesus came on earth in order that He might give Himself to the people for the salvation of their souls. He came on earth in order to die for His children. Without Him they could not get to heaven. Yet, He wanted them in heaven. So, He came on earth as a human being with the decided intention in His mind of dying for them before going back to heaven. What more can one person do for another person than to die for him?

Parents should drive the idea and the practice of self-sacrifice into the minds and the wills of their children at all times. But Christmas is a particularly propitious time for so doing. What child can be selfish in the face of the selflessness of the Child in the manger? What child who knows the story of Bethlehem can refuse to be kind to other children in view of the tremendous charity of the Infant Jesus on the first Christmas night?

Of course, as was said above, these spiritual ideas should be implanted in the children all during Advent and not just the day before Christmas. Nor should parents absolve themselves of the duty on the score that the Sisters in school take care of all such things. Mothers and fathers are instructors even more so than the Sisters in the school. They have the *obligation* to instruct their children in that which is right and good.

**W**HATEVER props parents can find to emphasize the lessons they teach their children they should use. Thus, every Christian home should have a replica of the stable and the manger and the holy characters of the great event for the Christmas holidays. This replica should be in a prominent place. It should take precedence over the Christmas tree and the gifts under the Christmas tree. In fact it should be the very heart and soul of the whole Christmas celebration. It should give purpose and point to the celebration.

In these ways CHRIST will be kept not only in the *word*, "Christmas," but also in the celebration of Christmas. And Christ will be much happier in consequence.

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Booker T. Washington once remarked about racial prejudice: "You can't hold a man down without staying down with him."



# For Wives and Husbands Only

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

## Drinking Husbands

**P**ROBLEM: When is drinking sinful?

Almost once a week my husband calls me and says that a friend has come to town and invited him out for a drink. After about two drinks he forgets all about his home and before he knows it, it is three or four o'clock in the morning. He says there is nothing wrong with this, that many priests have told him that drinking is not a sin if one doesn't become drunk. But what about the bad example to other men? What about the example to our nine-year-old son? What about the lives he endangers when driving home almost sound asleep? What about the anxiety he causes his wife who must get up early the next morning and take care of six small children? Because he is a good provider, is he entitled to this kind of conduct?

**S**OLUTION: This problem stems from the false and selfish notion of some husbands that, so long as they provide sufficient money to maintain their home, they have little further responsibility toward their wives and children. There are entirely too many men who sum up their total obligation as husbands and fathers with words (or actions that mean the same thing) like these to their wives: "I bring in the money; don't bother me about anything else, and don't interfere with my pleasures."

The father who drinks practically all night on an average of once a week does a great injustice to his wife and will event-

ually do great harm to his children. He quotes priests as saying that it is not a sin to drink if a man doesn't become drunk; but he does not say that he told any priest that once a week he stays out all night drinking. If he did, he would be told that he is guilty of causing great worry to his wife, giving bad example to his children, hurting himself and endangering others. In fact, this is one of the sure ways to alcoholism; he may go just so long doing this without getting drunk, but the day (or the night) will inevitably come when the drink will get the better of him. His wife, like everybody else, knows that, and has to live in constant dread that some night he will end up in jail, or in a brawl, or in an accident. Only blind selfishness can induce such a man to say: "That's my business; my wife should not worry about it." The husband has an obligation to spare his wife such unnecessary worry.

**I**T IS hard to change a man who has got into the habit of neglecting his wife and children for the sake of drinking bouts with his cronies. The habit seems to stultify a man's mind, and to make him incapable of recognizing the heartaches he is causing others. We wish that there were some special treatment that could be given these "I. A.'s" (Incipient Alcoholics) that would sharpen their sensibilities and waken their responsibilities and make them realize in what terrible misery they may end.

# SIDEGLANCES

By the Bystander

## What's Wrong with High School Proms?

**A** courageous Notre Dame nun, Sister Mary Henrita, a teacher in a Milwaukee high school, has come out in *Today* magazine with an excellent analysis of the evils that attend the institution known as the high school prom. Her observations are so acute that we do not hesitate to present and enlarge upon them here, and to urge parents and Catholic high school authorities to give them the most grave consideration. Above all, we ask teen-agers to face them boldly, despite the immediate temptation they may feel to accuse anybody who writes of these things to be a kill-joy, a spoil-sport, an old foggy merely intent on limiting youth's opportunity for innocent fun.

Most teen-agers are pretty realistic people and are not afraid of facts. Moreover they are more experienced in these matters than even the most careful observers, and may, after reading this, be able to make suggestions and offer criticisms that will help to eliminate the evils that have increasing-

ly attached themselves to high school proms.

**S**ISTER Henrita states that the present day high school senior-junior prom is loaded with liabilities which fall under three heads. The first is the fierce competition for prom partners to which they give rise, with an inevitable injury to less favored boys and girls, who have to bear a couple of months of agony wondering whether they will have a partner for the prom at all.

"Sympathetic teachers," says Sister Henrita, "watch the silent agony of the 'girls who don't get asked.' Their hungry, wistful looks when the topic comes up (and it's the mainstay of conversation for weeks before) make one wish to drop the whole business. Occasionally something similar happens to a boy. . . . He asks girl after girl, not realizing that his general lack of acceptability rests on such imponderables as 'personality,' 'can't dress,' 'odd,' 'no car,' all

of course accounting for the lack of desired glamor."

This evil of hurt and injury to some girls and boys ties in with and even promotes two other high school evils. They are the evils of 1) too early and 2) exclusive, steady dating. On the one hand, high school students are told (or should be told with appropriate explanations) that steady dating is forbidden them unless they can prudently decide to look forward to marriage within a reasonable time. Thus, if a junior or senior in high school firmly intends to go to college after graduation and to spend four years working for a degree, and excludes the very thought of marriage during that time, that person should not keep steady company in high school.

The emphasis on proms goes far to nullify this reasonable rule. Young people feel they have to have "a steady" to be sure they will have a partner for the prom. And the tradition has been established that once two teen-agers start going out together, they are to be considered as "belonging to each other," and "off-limits" to the rest of their school-mates. This more or less forces them into the exclusive dating that is so great a danger as to be wrong for those who cannot or don't choose to marry within a reasonable time.

Even without elaborate proms, the tendency of young people to enter into the danger of steady, exclusive company-keeping before the proper time is always strong

and needs to be checked. The anticipation of a prom adds greatly to the difficulty of restraining the inclination. It places a premium on premature steady dating, and a hardship on those who keep the rules pertaining to such dating.

THE second evil of which Sister Henrita speaks is that of the expense connected with the proms. There are many Catholic parents who consider \$40 a huge sum of money to pay as tuition for a whole semester, or, in some cases, even a year of Catholic high school education for a child. Yet these same parents are lucky to get off with an expenditure of \$40 to make a child happy at a prom. New dresses, new suits, expensive corsages, taxi-service, high-class dinners, after-the-prom snacks — these items can add up to far more than \$40. Again there is the unfairness and the injury to those whose parents cannot afford the best of everything. But apart from that, there is something out of order in the very idea of spending as much money on a single evening's entertainment as it costs to give a youth six months or a year of schooling.

THE third and worst of the evils that has attached itself to the modern high school prom is that of the post-prom activities of many of the young people. It has become quite common for prom night to be made not only a for-

mal dance lasting 'till 12 or 1 o'clock, but a dusk to dawn celebration. In some instances this is done innocently enough, as when a crowd gathers, after the prom, at the well-chaperoned home of one of the group. But there are always those who don't go to anybody's well-chaperoned home, but to places where there cannot possibly be anything but danger. "By 11 P.M.," Sister Henrita observes, "prom-goers flit elsewhere—some to catch a quarter of an hour at some other dance . . . ; some to stroll in the cool through darker streets; some, socially ill-adjusted, to sit in parked cars; some to their homes for the next party of the evening."

These extra-prom activities have come to be looked upon as one of the attractive features of the occasion, and all the fanfare that goes into preparing for the prom itself lends glamor to these dangerous extra activities. Only the naive will have to have spelled out for them the evils to which these customs can give rise.

**W**HAT about it, parents? Has the observant Sister quoted above overstated the case against the high school proms? Do you have a son or a daughter whom you have protected from too early steady company-keeping, only to find that, when prom time is approaching, they bitterly resent your training because they don't have a "steady" whom they can count on as a partner to the prom?

You may have complained about the tuition and the incidental expenses of a Catholic high school education; do you have no reasonable objections to the extraordinary outlay of money required to give your teen-agers one night of thrills? Do you go to bed on prom night with a childish confidence that, when you see your sons and daughters the next morning, no evil will have overtaken them in the dark hours? You have good reason to wonder about this thing, and to talk it over with other parents, and to make your voice heard in favor of eliminating, if not proms themselves, at least the danger and evils that are associated with them.

What about it, Catholic school authorities? Have you conceded too much to the secularistic customs of the times? Do you have to fear that Catholic teen-agers will no longer seek a Catholic education unless you hold out such rewards as proms and parties that promote the very evils that Catholic education is designed to remove? Is it not possible to find a way to promote wholesome recreation for young people without promoting envy and jealousy, exorbitant expenditures and moral dangers to those who are not yet ready to face and grapple with them?

What about it, teen-aged students of Catholic schools? Have you yourselves seen or experienced some of the evils connected with proms described above? Do

you feel that the good outweighs the evil, and that you should not be asked to give up the thrill of a prom just because somebody is hurt emotionally, financially and even morally whenever a prom is held? Would high school life be-

come dreary and drab without proms? You perhaps have the best answers to all the questions that have been raised, and the best suggestions for keeping what is good in proms while shucking off every vestige of evil.



## Thoughts for the Shut-in

*Leonard F. Hyland, C.S.S.R.*

### Spiritual Medicine

**I**T IS necessary when ill, to take the medicines that are prescribed by the doctor so that health may be regained. Some of these medicines are difficult to take because their taste is very bad. Some do not really cure but only render less painful the disease that is being endured.

No matter how excellent a prescribed medicine may be, its value will be slight unless with it, regular doses are taken of the spiritual medicine that faith provides. This medicine is different; it is never experimental; it always works on the soul and very frequently it also assists or cures the body.

**O**NE of the best kinds of spiritual medicine is prayer. It can be taken in several forms. There is the capsule form, very easy to take because all it requires is that the shut-in say a little ejaculatory prayer now and then during the day. There is the liquid form in which it is sipped from a large, full glass and made to last many minutes. It is taken in this form when a rosary is recited or when some other formal prayer is slowly and

thoughtfully said. Perhaps the most commendable feature about this spiritual medicine is that it can be taken by another and still help the shut-in: friends can pray for one, and every prayer will bring an added grace and new help for the bearing or cure of suffering.

**A**N excellent habit for the shut-in to adopt is that of using every occasion when some kind of material medicine must be taken as a reminder that it is time for a dose of spiritual medicine as well. Before and after swallowing a capsule or a tablet or a spoonful of medicine of any kind, the sick person should say an ejaculatory prayer. While sipping a distasteful tonic, he can divert his thoughts by reciting a decade of the rosary. And while accepting the ministrations of nurses and attendants, he should ask God, by an act of contrition, to make his soul more strong and healthy.

Thus soul and body will be, at the same time, taken care of and helped along the road to well-being.

# THE FIVE SCAPULARS

- This is a summarized account of the five
- scapulars, usually worn as a unit, and of
- the promises made to those who wear
- these scapulars.

RAYMOND J. MILLER, C.S.S.R.

**R**ED — white — blue — black — brown: these are the *five scapulars*, five little pieces of wool, each about an inch square, worn by Catholics as an act of devotion to the Mother of God.

With one exception, they are small-scale copies of the religious garb worn by monks and nuns of various religious orders. Wearing them signifies an intention on the part of the wearer to share, as far as he can, in the life of the monks or nuns of these orders: their prayers, works, merits; their influence with God; and the benefits that God or Our Lady have promised from heaven to confer upon those who would be faithful in wearing that particular religious garb.

The one exception is the red scapular; this one was revealed from heaven by Our Lord precisely as a small scapular; it is not derived from any larger religious garb.

And it is true that each of the five scapulars is traced back to a revel-

ation from heaven; although the revealing covered an immense period of time. It was six and a half centuries, to be exact. The first revelation, about the white scapular, occurred in the year 1190; and the last one, about the red, was made in 1846.

Here are the stories of those revelations.

**S**T. JOHN of Matha, a Spaniard, was saying his first holy Mass in 1190 when he saw over the altar the figure of an angel wearing a white robe, with a blue and red cross on the breast and the shoulder. St. John was given to understand that this was the kind of religious garb, or *habit*, that the Lord wished to be worn by the members of the new religious order that John was about to found. It was to be called the Order of the Most Holy Trinity, and was to be dedicated to the work of redeeming Christians who had been captured by the Turks of northern Africa and reduced to slavery.

In 1198 St. John and his first companions had applied to Pope Innocent III for papal approval of their

new order. While he was debating the matter, he too had a vision of the angel in the white robe with the red and blue cross, and thereupon did grant the approval. Such is the story related in the Roman breviary of the origin of the Trinitarian Order, and incidentally of its scapular, the *white* scapular. And beyond a doubt the order and its work turned out to be worthy of the approval of heaven and the Church. During the three centuries from 1200 to 1500, there were some *ninety thousand* Christians rescued by its means from behind the iron curtain of those days.

Next in order of time to be revealed from heaven was the black scapular of the Sorrowful Mother, or of the Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

**I**N THE year 1240 there were seven men, prominent citizens of Florence in central Italy, who had gathered together regularly and bound themselves by vow to honor the Mother of God in her sorrows. One evening while they were at their prayers, she appeared to them holding some black garments in her hands. "Behold," she said, "the manner of the garments with which I wish you to be clothed. These garments shall be to you a perpetual memory of the sufferings of my heart."

Following upon this vision, the seven holy men founded the Order of the Servants of Mary, or the Servites. It is well known in the United States as the order which promotes the novena devotions in honor of the

Sorrowful Mother, held in many churches every Friday night. The small black scapular of the Sorrowful Mother derives its origin from this vision of the Mother of God. In fact, there is evidence to show that historically this black scapular was the first of all the five small scapulars to be adopted and worn by lay people.

Next came the brown scapular in 1251 and 1322. The Roman breviary relates that Our Lady appeared to St. Simon Stock, an Englishman who was superior-general of the Carmelite Order, in Cambridge, England, in the year 1251. Holding in her hands the brown habit of the Carmelites, she made this promise: "Whoever dies in this habit shall not suffer everlasting fire."

In 1322 Pope John XXII issued a papal document in which he declared that Our Lady had appeared to him also and made this promise in regard to those who wear the brown Carmelite habit and fulfill certain other conditions: "I, the Mother of Grace, shall descend on the Saturday after their death, *and whomsoever I find in purgatory I shall free*, so that I may lead them to the holy mountain of life everlasting."

**T**HIS extraordinary promise has come to be known as the *Sabbatine Privilege* (in Latin, *Sabbatum* means Saturday). We shall have more to say about it when we come to speak of the benefits and the obligations connected with the wearing of the scapulars. Here we mention only that it is universally accepted in Cath-



olic life that this Sabbatine promise of Our Lady applies not only to actual members of the Carmelite Order, but it is connected also with the wearing of the small *brown* scapular, by any and all Christians.

Several centuries elapsed before heaven spoke again to reveal one of the five scapulars. This time it was in the year 1605, in the city of Naples, to a holy nun by the name of Sister Ursula Benincasa. Our Lord Himself appeared to her and made great promises if she and her fellow-nuns would adopt as their religious habit one of a light blue color in honor of the Immaculate Conception of His Mother. Sister Ursula then asked Him if He would grant similar favors to those of the laity or of other religious orders who would wear in honor of the Immaculate Conception a small *blue* scapular; and Our Lord did so promise.

This Sister Ursula Benincasa must have been a most unusual woman. It would be no ordinary woman or nun who could induce the members of her religious community, simply on her own word that she had had a heavenly vision, to put off their traditional religious habit and adopt one completely different; yet that is exactly what Sister Ursula accomplished. And when she lay dying, it is related that the leading citizens of the city of Naples gathered around her deathbed and made the unique request that she consent to becoming the patron saint of Naples as soon as she breathed her last and entered heaven. Holy Mother Church, too, must have found her an unusual

woman, for the cause of her beatification and canonization has been begun, and she is now officially Venerable Ursula Benincasa. Moreover, the blue scapular, as we shall see, was at one time the most richly indulgenced of all the scapulars; in fact, it was the most richly indulgenced devotion of any kind in the entire Catholic Church.

**S**EVERAL centuries passed again, and we come to the year 1846, to the city of Troyes in France, and to Sister Appoline Andriveau, of the Sisters of Charity. In that year Our Blessed Lord appeared to her, showing her the *red* scapular of the Passion, promising that whoever would wear it would receive a great increase of faith, hope and charity on every Friday. This vision was several times repeated; and the extraordinary thing about it is the rapidity with which it was approved in Rome. The visions occurred in 1846; and the very next year, 1847, Pope Pius IX approved it and enriched it with many indulgences. So prompt an action on the part of Holy Mother Church in a matter of this kind hardly has a parallel.

Such was the origin of each of the five scapulars. According to the accounts, each of them was revealed directly from heaven. The custom of wearing the small scapulars as a kind of small-scale copy of the original habit, it is true, did not come into practice until about the year 1600. By their connection with the originals, however, they too may be said to have come at least indirectly from heaven.



But the stories of these heavenly visions are not the only reason, nor indeed even the main one, for their importance and power in Catholic life. It is the approval of the Church which gives them their real value, and gives them the blessing of heaven more certainly and dependably than all the stories of revelations from on high.

**N**OW the Church has approved each one of the five scapulars independently, by itself: the red, white, blue, black and brown. And we might mention here that the Church has also approved many other scapulars besides our five. There are also those of the third orders of St. Francis and of St. Dominic; those of Our Lady of Good Counsel, of St. Joseph, of St. Benedict, of the Precious Blood, of the Sacred Heart, and the black scapular of the Passion; also the green scapular of Our Lady and a number of others; about twenty in all.

Our own five scapulars however, have one very special distinction; they have been approved not only each by itself, but also all together. The five scapulars are one single devotion, approved as such by the Church.

In Europe about the beginning of the present century they were often called *The Redemptorist Scapulars*, for the Redemptorist Fathers on their missions always preached (as they still do) the devotion of the five scapulars, and had received power from Pope Leo XIII in the year 1886 to enroll the faithful in them.

Even as far back as St. Alphonsus' time, in the 1700's, Redemptorists had the faculties from the pope to enroll in four of the five: the white, black, brown and blue. And when the red scapular was revealed to Sister Appoline in 1846, and Pope Pius approved it in 1847, it was not long before people began asking for that scapular as well as the four from olden times; and it was this popular demand that gave rise, in the providence of God, to the devotion of the five scapulars.

So much for the origin and approval of the five scapulars; now for their *benefits*.

**T**HE main one is that the wearer enjoys some special protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Even though not all the five are scapulars of Our Lady, yet in Catholic tradition they have come to be taken as a special sign of devotion to her. As such, St. Alphonsus recommends the wearing of the scapular in a list of *Devotions to Mary* he gives in his classic *Glories of Mary*; and states that he himself was enrolled in the four: white, black, brown and blue (in his time the red had not yet been revealed).

Another benefit is the company which the five scapulars bring us into. The wearer is affiliated somehow with *three* religious orders, and *four* confraternities. The three orders are: the Trinitarians, for the white scapular; the Servites, for the black; and the Carmelites for the brown. The four confraternities of which the wearer becomes a member by being enrolled in the five scapulars are: of

the Most Holy Trinity, for the white; of the Sorrowful Mother, for the black; of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, for the brown; and of the Immaculate Conception, for the blue. The last named is of comparatively recent origin: Pope Leo XIII established the confraternity of the Immaculate Conception on September 18, 1894.

And note again that the *red* scapular is not derived from any religious garb, and has no confraternity. It is a Catholic *devotion*. It does not make a wearer a member of any spiritual organization, but it has its own benefits and obligations.

**I**NDULGENCES are often spoken of as one of the great benefits of the five scapulars, but it must be said that at the present time they are not so extremely numerous. Perhaps there are three or four plenary indulgences every month, to be gained usually by receiving the sacraments and saying an *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory be* for the intentions of the Holy Father. The red scapular carries with it the privileges of gaining a plenary indulgence every Friday if one meditates for at least a quarter of an hour on the Passion of Our Lord. This should not be too difficult for persons who make a daily meditation. They could make it for that day on the Passion.

Next month we shall give a summary of the promises made to those who wear the five scapulars.

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Nothing is particularly hard  
if you divide it into small jobs.

## COMPLIMENTS OF THE NAVY!

After three months of fighting at Okinawa during World War II the ship in which I was the Chaplain was detached and sent to Leyte in the Philippines for a short period of rest sorely needed by all hands. I managed to get ashore to the little town of Tacloban for a visit to the church and a convent where Benedictine Sisters had conducted a school for native children. Originally they had come from Westphalia in Germany but the younger members of the community were all native girls.

When the Japanese first seized the islands the Sisters had fled to the interior where they carried on their work of teaching in the jungle. They suffered greatly and lacked food, medicine and clothing. When their habits fell apart they wore what they could find for there was no cloth with which to make new ones.

After the battle of Leyte Gulf and the coming of the Americans the good Sisters returned to their convent at Tacloban which happily had not been damaged too badly. They were given food and medical care by the Navy, but how would they get new habits? Since they wore white because of the intense heat this problem was quickly solved. The little Sister whom I visited smiled coyly as she turned over the hem of her scapular and showed me the letters U S N which the Navy stamped on all its bed sheets.

Harry S. Smith, C.S.S.R.



## CAUTION

I am careful of all the words I say,  
To keep them soft and sweet,  
For I never know from day to day,  
Which ones I'll have to eat.

St. Cloud Visitor



# readers retort

In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

## From a Mixed Marriage

"Please take note and cancel our subscription to your magazine. We subscribed some time ago, and the first copy came in with a bitter attack on all Protestants in mixed marriages. My wife and I resent your remarks because we have lived for over 30 years in such a marriage with as little friction as we think most married couples have. I note that you ask all Catholic parties to mixed marriages to resist any pressures from the other party but to work and pray diligently for the non-Catholic to become a Catholic. You want to deny one party a privilege you think the other is entitled to enjoy. It is my belief that it is the function of the clergy to promote peace and good will instead of mistrust and hate. Neither my wife or I desire to read any more of your remarks. Memphis, Tenn. W.B.D."

*It is difficult to write about the duties of Catholics in mixed marriages without awakening the resentment of some non-Catholics who are in such marriages. This is true because so many Americans have been brought up to resist the truth that there is only one true religion, and that anyone who knows he possesses the one true religion is bound in conscience to try to help others to recognize and embrace it. Perhaps the most insidious and fatal of all the dangers of mixed marriage is that they so often bring the Catholic to say: "I no*

*longer believe that there is only one true religion."*

The editors

## Evidence for Answer Above

"Let's assume that a Catholic girl has been dating a non-Catholic boy and they are planning on getting married. The girl's mother and father are supposed to be Catholic. Neither of them goes to Church. The boy on the contrary is a devout Lutheran. What is better for the couple — for the Catholic girl to become a Lutheran so that there won't be a mixed marriage or for the boy to become a Catholic? The boy says he simply will not become a Catholic. The girl can change her religion for the boy and attend church with him, worshipping the same God she would worship as a Catholic; or she can refuse to change and eventually fall away from church altogether. What is better? St. Paul, Minn. D. A."

• *It is very probable that the greatest blame for this girl's confused thinking must be placed upon her parents. We publish this letter to demonstrate what strange ideas get into the minds of Catholics in regard to mixed marriage. That is why we keep coming back again and again to topics like this. There really should be no doubt whatever about the solution of the above problem. Christ founded only ONE religion. Study and prayer will show that reli-*

gion to be the Catholic religion. A person who gives up the Catholic religion simply to have a more peaceful marriage is trying to buy happiness at the price of the possible loss of his soul. Our advice to this girl is to talk to her parish priest, to obtain reading matter on the Catholic Church and to pray constantly and fervently that she may never lose the faith God gave her.

The editors

### From the North

"While I accept every explanation in your masterpiece on racial segregation, in the August issue, I still feel that God gave me a free will and that, without malice or prejudice or bigotry, I have the right to 1) attend Mass at a Church where only members of my own race are present; 2) live in a community where only members of my own race reside; 3) eat in a restaurant where only members of my own race eat; 4) stop in hotels where only members of my own race stop; 5) play golf and attend social functions at places where only members of my own race are allowed. . . . I don't hate niggers and I want to save my soul. I will do nothing to injure a Negro in any manner, but I believe that my free will entitles me to live and move in a neighborhood of my choice and that is an all-white neighborhood.

Chicago, Ill.

M. D."

• Many people, including some Catholics, say that "they don't hate Negroes, they don't want to injure them in any way, but they don't want Negroes anywhere near them." To the present spokesman of this group we say that God indeed gave you free will, and through that free will you have the power to do many things that God has forbidden you to do by His law. We believe it to be an established fact that segregating Negroes in ghettos and depriving them of access to public facilities, institutions and opportunities implies and results in discrimination that is a violation of God's law: *Thou shalt love thy neigh-*

*bor as thyself. You say you do not want to injure the colored, but you are injuring them far more deeply than you realize by insisting on their staying away from you even (God save us all when Catholics take this stand) in church.*

The editors

### From the East

"Your articles on teen-agers puzzle me. The point you are trying to make is the necessity of teen-agers keeping the commandments, especially the sixth commandment. Yet you write about rhythm and the facts of life and all kinds of other things touching sex. How come? I thought we were supposed to keep away from things like that. And another thing: in one place you say that teen-agers should not go out on steady dates — the same boy and the same girl. In another place you say that it is all right for a colored person and a white person to get married. I am a good Catholic girl, brought up in a Catholic grade school and high school. But I don't agree with you on inter-racial marriages, and there can be no debating on that. You're wrong and that's the end of it. New York, N. Y. A. B."

• 1. *There are times and places for everything; that includes discussions on matters of sex. It is easy to say, "You must be pure!" and then hope that people will know instinctively what being pure in practice really means. That is why instruction is necessary. No one can blame people for doing wrong in these matters if the people do not know what is right and what is wrong. THE LIGUORIAN tries to tell people what is right and what is wrong.* 2. *THE LIGUORIAN has never said that it is wrong for ALL teen-agers to keep steady company. It has said that teen-agers may keep steady company if they are able and willing to marry within a reasonable time.* 3. *THE LIGUORIAN has stated that inter-racial marriages are not against the law of God, the natural law or the law*

of the Catholic Church. Stating that truth in no way carries the implication that we are campaigning for and promoting interracial marriages.

The editors

### From the South

"Being a Southerner I find it very hard on a strictly moral issue to swallow some of your articles in the very few issues that I have received. If the Communists as well as the Catholic Church would have left us alone, this problem would have worked itself out in a matter of two or more generations. As a Southerner I would like to tell you that BLACKNESS has nothing to do with the issue. There are Negroes much more intelligent than I will ever be and there are others whose morals are much finer in the eyes of the Saviour than mine, but as a race they have no morals but are the inheritors of morals that will take generations to elevate. The problem is a complex one and I do believe that the Church could find the answer but not at present by integration.

Baton Rouge, La.

V. G."

• We quote from the article on Racial Segregation in the August issue: "We believe that progress in race relations will be achieved not by silence on the moral issues involved, but by straightforward, honest, intelligent discussions of the problems connected with this practical issue." The writer himself seems to admit that the matter of morals is not a direct result of being a member of one race or another, but a result, in part, of education, environment, etc. In the case of the Negro, if there is a generally lower standard of morals prevalent among them, we believe that it is the RESULT in great part of segregation which has denied them sufficient opportunity for self-development.

The editors

"After reading your scandalous and immoral proposals that we accept complete integration, I am of the opinion that your

magazine should be censored by the Legion of Decency. Your approval of interracial marriage is sickening. In the article you claim to have spent several months doing research work on the problems of segregation. You could have arrived at the same conclusions by reading a copy of the Daily Worker. I am happy that you do not represent the majority opinion of the Catholic Church. Catholics have been instrumental in removing the NAACP from the state of Louisiana and passing legislation to bar integration. It is a shame that a Catholic institution should stoop to rabble rousing and race baiting. If you must set yourselves up as experts in a different field than religion, I suggest you try baseball. In baseball you can make your dislike known without offending anyone but the umpire. I am sorry that you find it necessary to take such a stand on integration.

Houston, Tex.

L. H."

• We have quoted only a minor portion of this long and violent letter. We believe that we are not trying to set ourselves up as experts in a field different from religion. First of all, we are trying honestly to express what we believe are God's ideas and God's will on this problem and, secondly, we believe that we are writing about this problem just because the whole solution in theory and in practice must be based on religion which means eventually our responsibility to God. Further, in this letter, as in others received and quoted, we do not find an answer to the simple question around which the whole article was written: Is it morally wrong to deny to Negroes free access to the so-called public ("open-to-the-public") institutions, facilities and opportunities of the United States of America? If any individual chooses to say that it is NOT wrong to deprive human beings of such access, what arguments, on moral or religious grounds, can he advance for his stand? The question of how this problem is to be worked

out practically is another matter and does require an admixture of principle and prudence. But before the practical solution can be arrived at there is need of much thought, education in regard to the RELIGIOUS principles involved, frank discussion and most of all PRAYER.

The editors

"I am sending back to you the first copy of my subscription to THE LIGUORIAN. I was scandalized at your attitude on mixing the races. For this reason I am asking you to send no more copies of your magazine.

Houston, Tex.

G. C."

• We believe that the writer was shocked rather than "scandalized" by the article on racial segregation. But the mention or discussion of basic Christian charity that is due to all the children of God ought not to shock anyone. We suspect that there were a few shocked persons in the crowd on that day also, when Our Lord, to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" told the story about the man who had been left lying alongside the road, robbed and despoiled, and was then assisted by a Samaritan who was least of all expected to help him.

The editors

### From a Protestant

"I am one of the white members of the NAACP — a Protestant — and I want to circulate your wonderful article, QUESTIONS ABOUT RACIAL SEGREGATION, among some people I know. I want them to see for themselves the unequivocal stand which your Church has taken on this matter. You put us to shame. Please send me four copies of the August issue. Farmingdale, N. Y. Mrs. H. W."

### Morals in Advertising

"The reference in your article, 'Morals in Advertising' by Father Connell, to the sinfulness of inducing people to live beyond their means leaves me somewhat

perplexed. For instance, a Cadillac is an expensive automobile and a poor man can not afford to buy one. The manufacturers of Cadillacs, however, in order to promote the product, see fit to advertise in newspapers which are read by all classes of people, rich and poor alike. The man who wrote the Cadillac advertisement quite naturally would hope that it would induce someone to buy. The whole point is that the person or persons who prepared the advertisement were not necessarily sinful in their intentions, even if the ad did induce a poor man to buy the car and thereby live far beyond his means. It seems to me that the whole thing is a matter of self-restraint.

New York, N. Y.

P. J. B."

• The article in question referred specifically to selling the customer a way of life and fostering in him, by means of advertising, a false attitude toward material things that is marked by a gnawing desire to have the latest of everything, even for the sake of appearance only, so that he can "live modern" just as extremely as the people next door who always seem to be a step ahead. It is not too difficult to put a finger on this facet of modern advertising, whether it be the slowly dying "clobber-them-on-the-head" type or the fast-growing new "soft-selling" type.

The editors

### Secular Institutes

"I have an objection against one of your articles, namely, TEEN-AGERS AND SINGLE LIFE, in July, 1956. I quote. 'Certain things in this world can be done best only by those who are not married and who are not priests or religious.' How true! But I cannot understand why you left out the fourth total dedication that is possible for a person to make, namely, joining one of the secular institutes that Pope Pius XII so glowingly approved and praised. In this country and in Canada there are seven approved secular institutes, one foreign mission society and thirteen



pious unions offering total dedication in the world. The Grail Press, St. Meinrad, Indiana, publishes a pamphlet on secular institutes. Recently, Midwest Conferences, Notre Dame, Indiana, issued a bulletin on Total Dedication in the world which gives added information with names and locations of organizations not listed in the Grail publication. We believe that a magazine as widely read by teen-agers as THE LIGUORIAN should carry an article on this subject.

Chicago, Ill.

N. H."

• *An article on the secular institutes referred to in the above letter is in the process of preparation. Meanwhile, until this article is published giving the names and addresses of many of these institutes, those young people who are interested can write to the above addresses, as given, for further information.*

The editors

### A Vote of Approval

"I have noticed that your Readers Retort section carries far too few letters which point up some of the desirable features of a magazine like yours. Please let me say that one of the features I appreciate most is your attitude. Without ever modifying or compromising on basic and unchangeable principles, your explanations are always up-to-date. Your articles carry a feeling of 'currentness' with them. I always get the feeling that all articles and replies to letters are written from two points of view. First, to state the facts correctly, and second, to avoid as much as possible any misinterpretation on the part of the reader. I enjoy reading material that was written for me. I am sure there are times when you would like to write answers to letters that would do yourselves the most good at the time, but you never do. May God bless you for your most charitable attitude.

W. Roxbury, Mass.

G. H. W."

• *This is only one of many letters of this*

*kind which we receive. We publish this and other letters with "kind words" not only to show that we DO receive approving letters but to express our appreciation of the fact that our readers take the time and make the effort to give us an honest pat on the back, which is always a great help and inspiration to any human being.*

The editors

### Modesty in Dress

"Since the early part of the year I have been looking in each issue of THE LIGUORIAN for a good article on modesty in dress. So far no article. More and more Catholic young people — not only teen-agers but young people in their twenties (and older) — are 'dressing modern.' They just seem to accept the latest secular fashion without question. It's not uncommon to see girls in city churches wearing beach-type costumes. You could do much good by a forceful article which would point out to young people the harm they can do to others by appearing in 'what the crowd is wearing.'

Cambridge, Mass.

L. H."

• *THE LIGUORIAN has carried articles, many articles in recent years, on immodesty in dress. And there will be more articles in the future.*

The editors

### Kind Words

"My husband and I are enthusiastic readers of THE LIGUORIAN and agree with the Franciscan Father who says that THE LIGUORIAN and FRIAR are the finest in Catholic periodical literature today. Publishing a review such as yours is a fine example of being really helpful to Catholic couples who sincerely desire to live as God wants them to. (Our confessor has assured us we have ample reason to use the rhythm system for at least a while.) You certainly are not afraid to tackle controversial subjects — and I'm sure God will bless your efforts.

Claymont, Dela.

M.C.K."



# THE MASS--- MY OFFERING

JOHN N. MCCORMICK, C.S.S.R.

JOHN A. TREINEN, C.S.S.R.

We do not assist at Mass, nor merely  
go to Mass. We take part in  
the Mass. We stand at the altar,  
hand in hand with Christ. That is  
just what we need in our lives.

**T**HAT the Mass is our sacrifice, the sacrifice of the mystical body of Christ, is expressed throughout the whole ritual and words of the Mass, but especially in the part we would like to consider now — that part called the first principal part — the offertory.

Both by action and by word the Church strives to remind us of our part in the sacrifice when the priest says the prayer at the mingling of the few drops of water in the chalice of wine at the offertory.

As the priest pours a few drops of water into the wine, he says this prayer which you may follow if you are using a missal: "O God, Who in creating human nature didst wonderfully dignify it, and hast still more wonderfully renewed it, grant that by the mystery of this water and wine we may be made partakers of His divinity Who has vouchsafed to become partaker of our humanity,

Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost."

## What This Prayer Means for Us

**T**HIS prayer reminds us that God had made Adam a masterpiece, the paragon of His creation. He had endowed him with wonderful gifts, which Adam rejected. Then God, by the Incarnation, and by the death of Christ, still more wonderfully renewed, recreated, and caused man, in the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, to be reborn by water and the Holy Ghost. As a result man has now become a partaker of the divinity of Christ, even as Christ became by His birth, a partaker of our humanity.

To represent this truth more vividly to our minds, the water becomes a symbol of us, human beings, while the wine is an emblem of our divine head, Christ. The water alone is not

offered to God because without Christ, we, the water, would have no value. Nor is the wine alone without the water offered to the heavenly Father, because unless we are in the Mass it cannot benefit us. Therefore the water and the wine are mingled to show us that we, in and with Christ, are the sacrifice that is being offered to the Divine Father.

Think of what that ought to mean for our daily lives! What a life of goodness and sinlessness we ought to lead so as to make our actions worthy offerings to God! Then we shall be able to say of all that we do: here is another drop of myself poured into the chalice of all Masses. Living thus as water mingled with Christ, we shall become worthy members of Christ's mystical body, we shall grow into an extension of Christ in the world, and shall be able to say: "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me."

**I**N THE ancient days of Christianity before churches were as immense as they are now and before Christians were numbered in the thousands, the faithful assisting at Mass expressed this act of offering themselves with Christ, not merely in words, but even in actions. In our Masses today there is only one procession of the faithful to the altar to take part in the Mass—and too many do not take part even in that—at the Communion. Then the faithful come to the altar to receive, to partake of the fruits of the sacrifice of the Mass. In the olden days there were two processions, one, to the

altar to give, the other, to receive at Communion time.

The faithful of those days understood well that they partook both in the offering and in the receiving of the Eucharist. They approached the altar each one in person and presented their part in the sacrifice; some gave bread and wine, flour or fruits. Others offered gold or other precious gifts according to their means. But their gift even then was a sign of the inner spiritual gift of themselves which each one made to God. By it they showed their readiness to sacrifice whatever God asked of them in their lives. Some of these gifts were used for the consecration—the bread and the wine. Others were kept for the adornment of the church, the altar, the sacred vessels, and what remained was set aside for the poor.

### Our Offering in the Mass

**I**N OUR days when this procession is quite impossible and these assorted gifts are impractical, we, the faithful, no longer offer bread and wine and other material gifts. But the disposition, the readiness to sacrifice and to give ourselves to God out of love is still possible, yes, still necessary for each one of us.

The present practice of taking up the collection and receiving the offerings of the faithful at this part of the Mass is not just a matter of convenience, not held at this time merely because the faithful are seated and have nothing else to do. This is a continuation of the ancient offertory procession. This act should be performed in the same spirit in which

the early Christians presented their gifts as part of the sacrifice and as symbols of themselves. It is a pity that the materialism of our age, the immediate needs of building and repairing churches and schools, in fact all such things as brick and mortar and coal should loom so large in our minds as to obscure the true meaning of the offertory. The visible gifts go to the same uses as the gifts of the early Christians, namely the service of God and the needs of the Church, the mystical body of Christ.

But we have forgotten the deeper meaning, forgotten our personal offering, whereas that is of more value to God than all the bricks in the world. He can create bricks and stones out of nothing, but He cannot force your love to offer yourselves to Him. You and you alone can do that. Thus while the dramatic expression of self-offering in a procession is past, the idea and sentiment of it is preserved in the offertory prayers and collection.

#### Offering of Ourselves

**I**F ONLY we say the prayers of the Mass with the priest, this thought of self-offering will be brought clearly to our minds. Lifting our eyes on high to the raised chalice we shall offer ourselves with Christ. Notice, it is *we* the priest says, not *I*. "We offer Thee the chalice of salvation, that in the sight of Thy divine majesty, it may ascend with the savor of sweetness for our salvation and that of the world."

May we be pleasing to God when offered together with Christ His Son

—pleasing as an odor of sweetness! Bending down in humility before God, mindful of the words of the Psalmist, "A contrite and humble heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise," we beg that we may be received favorably by Him, and "May our sacrifice be so offered up in Thy sight this day that it may be pleasing to Thee, O Lord." But Christ and His sacrifices are always pleasing to the Father: "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." Clearly then these words refer to us, that we by goodness and sinlessness of life may be acceptable to God.

Raising his eyes on high again, the priest prays to the Holy Spirit, "Come, O Sanctifier, almighty and eternal God, and bless this sacrifice prepared for Thy holy name." Again Christ, the Son of God needs not to be blessed but we do, and the blessing is said more over us and our offering than over Christ. Then after the psalm begging God to make us pure and sinless as well as worthy to take part in His sacrifice, we summarize our offering in a beautiful prayer of oblation to the Blessed Trinity.

**W**E HAVE already united ourselves to Christ as head of the mystical body, and with the priest we have offered Him first and then ourselves to the Divine Father. Now we unite ourselves to the whole mystical body, to our Blessed Lady, to the apostles, to all the saints—for they too are members of Christ. In no grander way can we honor our Blessed Lady and the saints than by giving them part again in the Mass.

Then turning to the people, the priest begs them or rather commands them to "pray that both my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty." Notice the words, "my sacrifice and yours." The Mass is our sacrifice — our possession! What a joy to be able to offer to God a spotless host as our own prayer and sacrifice and to offer ourselves with Him in one act!

The closing of the offertory is called the secret, from the Latin word *secreta*, meaning separated, because it was said over the gifts that were separated from the others to be consecrated in the Mass. The thought so prominent in all the offertory is repeated, namely, that we present our gifts to the divine Father, and we are also offered with them.

### How to Offer Yourself

**A**ND what are the gifts we offer—the gifts that we can place upon the paten and the altar side by side with the immaculate host that is to become Christ in but a few moments? During the offertory St. Gertrude was accustomed to place herself upon the paten in spirit, surrendering to God her body with all its senses, her soul with all its powers. Let us not neglect in spirit to place our offering on the paten next to Christ, as a small host near the large host which is Christ.

Why do you suppose our Lord chose bread and wine out of all creation to represent His body and blood? First of all, to represent our unity one with another in His mys-

tical body. Just as wine is made up of many grapes and bread of many grains of wheat, so we the individual members of Christ are made one with Christ in the re-offering of Calvary to the heavenly Father. The second reason was probably to remind us that our part in the Mass was a sacrificial part, that we assist at Mass not as spectators at a drama, but as cooperators. For just as grapes become wine only by passing through the wine-press, so too we become one with Christ only by reproducing in our lives the cross which He lived in His own life. And finally, because in offering bread and wine we offer the most substantial nourishments of life which represent the very substance of our being.

Therefore we offer first ourselves, our body, our soul, that there may be nothing in them unworthy of a member of Christ, nothing that cannot stand side by side with Christ and be offered to the divine Father; and whatever of evil or sin is in us, that we offer to be destroyed.

**H**AVE we not some sorrow that weighs us down? Let that be our gift to God, sanctified and made especially pleasing through the cross of Christ. Must we not work and labor from early morning till late at night, at home, in factory, in office or on the street? Let us offer our work and our good will; they are precious gifts. Has God perhaps lavished joys and prosperity upon us, blessed us abundantly with health and happiness? With grateful hearts let us bring our joys, our happiness, our good things and offer them to

Him, that they may not injure us. Has God sent us poverty, sickness, loneliness? Then with a resigned love let us unite them with His poverty and pain and loneliness.

Every one of us must often practice self-denial, restraint of our passions, avoidance of the occasions of sin and evil; every one of us knows what St. Paul meant when he said, "They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with its vices and concupiscences." Let these too be our gifts in the offertory. Never come to Mass empty-handed, for God has given each of us something that we can and should bring to bind us to our divine Friend and Head—Christ!

#### Our Share in the Sacrifice

**D**O YOU now see what St. Peter implied when He called the ordinary faithful a kingly priesthood, implying that they as well as the specially consecrated priesthood have a share in offering sacrifice to God? That is your right, your privilege—to be offered. Then we go from the Mass to resume the work of our daily lives. Behind us we leave the altar and the tabernacle housing the sleepless Christ, Who from that vantage point watches the world and us. The candles go dead in their sockets. The missal and cards are removed. The altar is covered reverently by the sacristan. Mass there has ended.

But the Mass that our lives might and should be is not ended. Our task of offering sacrifice is not over. We still have lives of endless sacri-

fice to lead. Like the priesthood of Christ, our priesthood never ends. *We can make our lives Masses.* We can make not merely a good intention in our works, we can make our works Masses. With a vast sweeping intention, as in the morning offering of the Sacred Heart Apostleship of Prayer, we can unite ourselves with the Masses as they are offered in endless succession around the globe.

#### Every Action of the Day

**E**VEN more personally, we can offer to God with Christ every least and every greatest action of the day, and we can offer it with the priest who at that moment celebrates one of the three hundred and fifty thousand Masses said throughout the world each day. All that we say and do and suffer as the hands of the clock swing round, we as offerers, can present on the altar to God. Our most trivial actions can become other offertories placed on other patens and poured into other chalices around the earth.

We do not cease to act as offerers even when we resume the common places that occupy us at desk, counter, workshop, in kitchen, classroom or office, on the playing field, at the party, or during a play. All may be offered by ourselves, the members of a priestly head, Christ, to God.

If we really want to make a profitable good intention, then let us offer ourselves and our works with Christ in every Mass. There they take

on a value that comes from Christ. And thus we shall see the new dignity and worth that invests our actions. They carry the morning sacrifice through the day.

**WE** DO not assist at Mass, nor merely go to Mass. We take part in the Mass. We stand at the altar, hand in hand and heart in

heart with Christ Himself. That is just what most of us need. It is so hard to work and suffer and carry on alone, but to have another with us, a strong Friend, Who offers Himself with us, sacrifices Himself with us, and lives with us, that is encouraging and heartening. That makes our offering and life easy and joyful. We have that with Christ in the Mass!

## Signposts Upward

### Slander and Charity

*John Fitzpatrick, C.S.S.R.*

**T**HE eighth commandment may very well be, of all the ten, the one most often offended against. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Much suffering in the world is brought about by the breaking of this important rule; its keeping would contribute a great deal towards universal peace and concord.

#### I. Negative

In its most obvious application, the eighth commandment forbids outright slander and calumny. A man's reputation and good name are his most precious possessions in life, and it certainly would be a great act of wrongdoing to shatter them by untrue accusations and allegations.

This commandment goes further, however, and forbids one to talk about a very real fault or failing of one's neighbor, so long as it is more or less secret and hidden. This follows the principle that everyone is entitled to his reputation unless or until he has publicly lost it, that is, unless his fault has become known to all. If you are the only one who knows about his fault, you have no right to talk about it publicly.

#### II. Positive

On the positive side, the eighth commandment requires a definite effort to be

charitable and kind in talking about others.

Most people do not fail seriously by slander (though the sin may be more common than the slanderers themselves like to admit). The more common fault is niggling gossip, the retailing of small faults and foibles and unlovely traits of others. Surely this is one of the easiest faults to commit in everyday conversation.

To overcome it a definite effort must be made to cultivate the contrary virtue of charity. Something good can be found to say of anyone, if one looks diligently enough. A charitable old lady was twitted by one of her friends: "I suppose you would find something good to say even about the devil!" "Aye," was the reply, after a moment's thought, "he's an industrious body."

**T**HE individual thus truly charitable in speech is a wonderful asset to any group or community; he is a "peacemaker" in the best sense of the term, because discord arises most commonly from unkind and bitter speech. To such a one the words of Christ to Mary Magdalen can fittingly be applied: "Much is forgiven her because she has loved much." She has truly loved her neighbor by shunning uncharitable speech, and in this likewise has proved her love for God.

# Pre-Marriage CLINIC

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

## Must Past Sins Be Revealed before Marriage?

**PROBLEM:** I am going through a fearful mental disturbance, and I wonder if you could help me. A few years ago I was very confused about a lot of things and fell into an illicit love affair. I've repented and shed a lot of tears over it. It is hard for me to believe that I could fall so low, and it has destroyed my self-respect to a certain degree. Now I have met a man who says he would never hurt me because he loves me so much. He says that it is because I am clean and good that he loves me so much. I feel like a hypocrite. How can I ever explain to him that I have sinned so terribly? Also I understand that when two people go to the priest to be instructed before marriage, they are asked under oath whether they have lost their virginity. I have already confessed my sins, and I can't understand why I should have to make such a public confession. I want to be good, but it seems that I have spoiled my whole life. Is there any chance for me?

•

**SOLUTION:** First and quickly, let us disabuse you of the foolish and false notion that any questions will be asked concerning your previous sins if and when you go to a priest to be instructed before marriage. Someone has told you a fable about this, in which there is not even a grain of truth.

It is good that you feel remorseful over your past sins, because such feelings of remorse will help you to make full atonement by offering up the inevitable sorrows of your life, and will keep you humbly on guard against ever falling back into sin. But remorse and sorrow for sin should never make you doubt the glorious gift of God's forgiveness, which you received in confession. Nor should it make you feel like a hypocrite, now that you have renounced your past sins forever. By the grace of God you are clean and good now, and you should rejoice over the fact that God did not permit you to sink deeper and deeper into evil habits and perhaps to end up in a lifetime of sin.

**T**HERE is no necessity or obligation for you to tell your boy-friend about your past lapse into sin. God has forgiven it, and God does not want it to stand in the way of your vocation in life, which appears to be marriage. It is natural that you should feel a new twinge of remorse when your boy-friend talks about your being so good, but you should use that as an inspiration to live up to the ideal he has of you for the rest of your life. Just be determined that nothing in the world, not even this beloved friend, will ever lead you into sin again. With that determination you may well leave your past buried in the mercy of God.



# THE SAINTLY MAN OF SURINAM

MARTIN A. STILLMOCK, C.S.S.R.

Story of a Redemptorist  
missionary who was called the  
Apostle of the Lepers.

WE could call him the second Damien or the Apostle of the Lepers. But we prefer to call him simply: Peter Donders. He was born in Tilburg, Holland, on October 27, 1809. Though not nearly as well known as the heroic Damien de Veuster, from the neighboring country of Belgium, in the providence of God he was called upon for the same self-sacrificing heroicity. These two great men contributed much to the lustre of the Church's missionary activities among most abandoned souls in the 19th century.

The life story of Peter Donders is amazingly simple and devoid of dramatics. As a young boy Peter knew the hardships of poverty, work and privations of every sort. Little did he realize that God was preparing his soul and steeling his thin and emaciated frame for even greater hardships. From his earliest years he longed to work in the Lord's vineyard as a

priest of God. His ardent desire seemed destined to remain unfulfilled, for he had to work many long hours to help in the support of the Donders family. Hence his schooling was all but neglected. Finally at the age of 22 he entered the seminary.

DONDERS' life as a seminarian has its points of contrast with another great 19th century figure: the holy Cure of Ars. Like John Vianney, he lacked great intellectual endowments. Very often the superiors and professors were convinced that Peter Donders would make a wonderful, loyal, and faithful servant boy. But a priest? They wondered. But again like John Vianney his evident holiness entitled him to a full trial. Not everyone could be a Thomas Aquinas or an Alphonsus Liguori. The ranks of the priesthood had more than ample room for one of such strong character and zeal. So it was decided that Peter Donders would be given a

chance to go all the way in his studies and preparations for the priesthood.

It is not an easy thing for a young man of 22 to begin studying Latin grammar. Add to this a deficient education and it is harder still. Put him in a class of twenty rollicking, frisky young teen-agers and it can be well-nigh unbearable.

To his classmates poor old Peter was just a plain dumbbell. His piety was misunderstood. His quiet mastery of self, his persevering efforts to overcome his slowness of mind were not appreciated by his younger classmates. He became the target for their pranks and jokes. His nicknames were various and uncomplimentary. Years later, even before his ordination, these same youngsters were to recognize Donders in a different light. Their lips were ready to sing his praises and tell of his holiness. With undaunted effort and courage in his studies he slowly moved to the top of his class in intellectual achievements. He was esteemed and loved for his piety, nobility of character, and for his good-natured cheerfulness.

**N**O golden tongue has yet been found to describe fully what is indescribable: the joy and meaning of the priesthood. So it would be impossible for us to describe the feelings of Peter Donders on the morning of June 5, 1841, for on that day he at length reached his much sought after goal and was ordained a priest forever.

Two years before Father Donders' ordination, the Prefect Apostolic of the Dutch Colony of Surinam, South

America, came to the seminary and gave a stirring picture of the apostolic work among the slaves and lepers under his jurisdiction. Then and there the generous seminarian resolved to work for these poor unfortunates. In 1842, a year after his ordination, he left for the mission fields of Surinam where he was to spend the remaining 44 years of his life.

The zestful missionary was not at once assigned to leper work. The slaves comprised his first field of apostolic labor. He would make the rounds of the plantations and give the maltreated wretches what spiritual consolations he could. Such was the miserable lot of these slaves that Father Donders wrote: "If they but did as much for the well-being and upkeep of our slaves as they do for the beasts of burden in Europe, what a change we should see."

**S**INCE the slaves could not often leave the plantations, Father Donders in effect transformed the plantations into miniature parishes. He baptized them there, heard their confessions, distributed Holy Communion, preached and instructed. Such were his labors for the first 13 years.

In 1863, the government declared that the 53,000 slaves in the colony were to be given their freedom. This act changed the scope of apostolic work in Surinam. The Vicar Apostolic and Father Donders both saw that only a religious order could now cope with the spiritual problem confronting them. Hence, in 1865, the Redemptorist Fathers were called in

from Holland to labor in Surinam. Father Donders who had long felt an attraction to the religious life, joined the Redemptorist Congregation. The 57-year-old novice was professed on June 24, 1867.

Father Donders was first sent to work among the lepers of Batavia in 1856. Here he labored successfully for ten years before he left to join the Redemptorists and to make his canonical novitiate. After his profession in 1867, he returned to his lepers, but now not only a priest, but a religious as well. He was to spend sixteen years more, or a total of twenty-six years altogether, as an apostle of mercy and charity to the lepers of Batavia, Surinam.

The situation Father Donders encountered in Batavia was much the same as Father Damien was to meet in Molokai some years later. The lepers were largely neglected and left to shift for themselves as best they could. Vice ran riot as the disease-ridden victims gave themselves over to heavy drinking, street brawls, improper and wild dances, together with other shameful excesses.

**I**NTO this havoc of human misery and spiritual desolation, Father Donders brought the balm and consolation of Catholic teaching and supreme Christian charity.

By constant preaching, teaching and exhorting he reached even the hardest hearts. His complete fearlessness of the disease and whole-hearted devotedness soon won him a place of esteem, confidence and respect throughout the whole leper colony.

To get his flock to church he often carried in his own arms those whose feet were already too ravaged by leprosy to walk. He entered the lepers' miserable hovels and cleaned out the filth. He put food and drink to the lips of those too crippled to move. He fetched their water, chopped their wood, made their messy beds, dressed their wounds, no matter how hideous and disgusting they were. Then he would wash out the putrid linen and bandages. He even went down on his knees to remove the chigoes from their feet to prevent itching and further swelling. What he had in possessions belonged also to the lepers. Many a time he contented himself with a slice of bread and gave his soup and piece of meat to some starving native. His begging and pleading with government officials effected many improvements which bettered the temporal lot of the poor inhabitants.

**W**AS he able to effect any spiritual transformation? We quote one of his first biographers: "So plentiful were the fruits of his labors, that Batavia — where physical suffering could be seen at its worst — was soon rightly called *the garden of the mission*. There can be no doubt about it: most of the flowers of grace that bloomed on that unlovely soil must have been transplanted from the unfading Garden of Paradise, for rare indeed were the sick who died without embracing the Catholic faith, and rarer still were those who left this world without receiving the sacraments."

In September of 1882, his *children* as Father Donders affectionately called his lepers, helped him celebrate his fortieth anniversary in Surinam and the twenty-fifth of his work among the lepers. Five months later he left his beloved lepers at the advanced age of 73 to work among the native Indians and also once again among the Negroes. But his absence was not of long duration.

In 1885, Father Donders, now 75 years old, was sent back to the leper colony of Batavia. His reception by his loving children was a real triumph. "The whole parish," says an eyewitness, "paid him the honors of a bishop and escorted him to the church amid singing and joyous hymns."

The Father had returned to his children to die in their midst. His constitution once thought to be so frail had survived the most appalling hardships and privations, so that he lived to the ripe old age of 77 years. But toward the end of 1886, he showed unmistakable signs of failing fast. On Wednesday, January 12, 1887, he was asked how he had spent the night. His answer showed his humility and his resignation: "Very well. I have no reason to complain. I have but one request to make: bear with me just a little longer. I shall die on Friday about three o'clock."

ON Friday, January 14, at three o'clock, while he was fully conscious and silently praying, when no one of those present suspected it, he gave back his beautiful soul into the hands of his Creator. Thus he died

as simply as he had lived — always a true child of God.

Little known outside of his native country, his congregation, and the mission fields where he labored, may it please God to make Peter Donders known throughout the Catholic world. The Church has taken such a step already. The humble simple Redemptorist priest, a true missionary, has been honored with the title of Venerable.

#### CURB SERVICE

Driving to work at his office in Tokyo one morning, an American army captain muttered to himself as he heard one of his tires go. . . . Whoooooosh. He got out to survey the damage, and thought of his spotless uniform as he got out his tools and started to jack up the car. The unexpected delay meant he'd probably be late for an appointment.

With his sleeves rolled up and halfway through the job, he looked up to see a young Japanese boy looking intently at the tire-changing operation. The small-fry made no wise-cracks, but evidently was amused, for he grinned down at the officer. Talking softly to himself the captain kept on with his task. As he was replacing the flat with the spare, he noticed that the youngster had taken off — a fact that gave him no mental anguish whatsoever. What was so funny about a flat tire, anyway?

But as he tightened the last remaining lug with his wrench and slapped on the hub-cap, he looked up in amazement. The little guy had returned bearing a bowl of hot water, soap and a towel.

*Scarboro Missions*

# POINTED PARAGRAPHS

## Voting for a Catholic

This publication ordinarily stays away from the realm of practical politics. Nevertheless, we feel impelled to note in passing a recent somewhat political declaration by a prominent minister in New York. Fearing that a Catholic might be nominated for vice-president of the United States, this gentleman made it known publicly that he for one could not in conscience vote for such a one, because of a Catholic's allegiance to an authoritarian religion.

The accusation that a Catholic cannot be a good American has often been made. Perhaps its best answer is the practical one that the number of Catholic young men who served their country in wartime, and shed their blood for it, is not only equal to their proportion of the population, but beyond it.

We commend to this shortsighted gentleman, serene in his deep-rooted and irrational prejudices, a study of the statement made by Governor Al Smith in the 1928 presidential campaign.

"I summarize my creed as an American Catholic. I believe in the worship of God according to the

faith and practice of the Roman Catholic Church. I recognize no power in the institutions of my Church to interfere with the operations of the Constitution of the United States, or the enforcement of the law of the land.

"I believe in absolute freedom of conscience for all men and in equality of all Churches, all sects and all beliefs before the law as a matter of right and not as a matter of favor.

"I believe in the absolute separation of Church and state, and in the strict enforcement of the provisions of the Constitution that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. I believe that no tribunal of any Church has any power to make any decree of any force in the law of the land, other than to establish the status of its own communicants within its own Church.

"I believe in the support of the public school as one of the cornerstones of American liberty. I believe in the right of every parent to choose whether his child shall be educated in the public school or in a religious school supported by those of his own faith.

"I believe in the principle of non-interference by this country in the internal affairs of other nations, and that we should stand steadfastly against any such interference by whomsoever it may be urged.

"And I believe in the common brotherhood of man under the common fatherhood of God.

"In that spirit I join with fellow Americans of all creeds in a fervent prayer that never again in this land will any public servant be challenged because of the faith in which he has tried to walk humbly with his God."

### **Parents Should Join the Union**

A resolution passed by the convention of the National Catholic Family Life Conference earlier this year in Boston struck us as particularly significant. Here is the way it was worded:

"Be it resolved: Because of very dangerous consequences, present and future, parents are bound in strict justice before God and society to band together and halt at once the growing and often immoral custom of teen-age steady company-keeping.

"Be they reminded that it is their strict parental responsibility to prevent their children from 'going steady' unless there is reasonable hope of a happy, successful marriage in the near future."

The significance of the resolution stems from the emphasis it places on concerted action by parents. Only too often, one fears, teen-agers have won pitched battles over uneasy and reluctant parents in this matter with

the dictum: "We know lots of kids whose parents let them keep steady company." Parents are human (although teen-agers sometimes may not think so), and they hate to feel as though they are acting in an unusually severe and somewhat eccentric fashion.

That is why it is a valuable idea, it seems to us, for parents of a given locality or parish to be united in formal agreement on such an important point. With a common knowledge of what steady company-keeping is, namely, the same boy going out on exclusive dates with the same girl frequently and continuously, they could find mutual support in assuring each other: "We are not going to permit this sort of thing for our high school sons and daughters."

There will be some mavericks, of course, and some parents who very foolishly refuse to recognize the danger involved in steady company-keeping by their immature youngsters. But enough surely will agree to form a line of defense. And this is an important line to be drawn and to be defended. Its defense will save the teen-agers and their parents much heartache and tragic error.

### **Christmas Cards by the Dozen**

This is the season when boxes of Christmas cards begin to appear in the mail. Sent out by various religious or charitable organizations to their mailing lists, these cards can be used by their recipients to dispatch their own greetings to friends and relatives. Thus the sending of these boxes of



cards is both a small service to benefactors and a means of enlisting for a worthy cause their continued support.

This is all very good, and we have no intention of decrying the practice. Many people have told us, indeed, that they appreciate receiving these assortments of cards by mail for their personal use.

One point, however, should be made clear. There are some people who grow somewhat distressed or uneasy in conscience because they receive a great many of these boxes from many different groups, and they feel they are unable to send a donation to each one of the senders.

Such persons may feel reassured in knowing that there is absolutely no obligation on their part to send money for such packages which they receive by mail as "gifts" from the organizations sending them. If they are in a position to send a small donation in return for these cards which are sent as a "gift" they will surely gain merit for generously doing so. But if the time comes when they honestly feel they have no more to give, and the boxes of cards keep rolling in, they can ignore them, or use them, or give them back to the postman, but in any mode of action they need not fear having transgressed the seventh com-

mandment, so long as it is certain that these cards were sent as gifts and not on the basis of "offer-for-purchase."

If these cards are sent to persons on an "offer-for-purchase" basis (if the *purchase price* is mentioned explicitly, etc.), then acceptance and use of them obliges to payment of the purchase price. But if they were not ordered, and are not wanted, the simplest solution is to give them back to the postman and then ask the organization not to send them in the future.

There are many worthy causes enlisting the support of the public nowadays, and the use of mailing lists is a very common way of reaching the public with appeals. Some people tell us that their names appear to be on a hundred different mailing lists, from the amount of begging literature they receive.

Again we say, there is no *obligation* to support all of these charitable endeavors. One can do only so much in the line of charity and contributions to worthy causes. On the other hand, people should not become annoyed that appeals are made to them for help. Let them select such causes as appeal to them, and give what they can, and God will bless their kindness.

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#### IT IS EASY . . .

to determine the date when your subscription to THE LIGUORIAN expires. Look at the address stenciled on the back cover of one of your copies. If the numbers at the end of the first line read "7-56," your subscription began with the 7th month of 1955, and the last issue you are entitled to receive is that of June, 1956.

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# LIGUORIANA

26th Sunday after Pentecost — November 18

## The Consolation of Death

By St. Alphonsus  
Selected and Edited by  
John P. Schaefer, C.S.S.R.

**I**N this Sunday's gospel Our Lord relates the parable of a woman who placed leaven in dough and waited until it was entirely fermented. The leaven, according to Christ's interpretation, signifies the kingdom of heaven, or divine grace, which enables the soul to acquire merit for eternal life. This eternal life, however, is obtained only when *the whole is leavened* — that is, when the soul has arrived at the end of the present life and the completion of her merits.

This gospel provides us with a much-needed opportunity to meditate upon our death. For we should not fear death, but should desire it with our whole souls.

**W**HAT is death? Saints agree that it is the end of all miseries. Job said that our life, however short it may be, is full of miseries and infirmities, of crosses, persecutions and fears. Why, then, says St. Augustine,

do men wish for a prolongation of life on this earth? To do so is but to desire a prolongation of suffering. St. Ambrose adds that the present life was given to us not for rest or enjoyment, but for labor and suffering. By these we may merit paradise. Though death is the punishment of sin, it should, therefore, be relief rather than a chastisement, for the miseries of this life are so great.

**T**HE most severe cross of all, to those who love God, is the constant attempt of hell to rob them of divine grace. They, therefore, go joyfully to meet death, as the end of their combats. They embrace it with gladness, for they hope to die a good death, and thus to be freed from all fear of ever again falling into sin. On the other hand the greatest consolation which such souls experience derives from the thought of being delivered from so many temptations, remorse of conscience and dangers of offending God.

The thought of being freed from the danger of sin by death was such a consolation to St. Theresa that she rejoiced as often as she heard the

clock strike. Another hour of the combat was past. She used to say: "In each moment of life we may sin and lose God." The news of approaching death, therefore, filled the saints with sentiments of joy rather than sorrow or regret. For they knew that their struggles and dangers of losing divine grace would soon be at an end.

ONE who is prepared to die regards death as a relief. Should you live in a house whose roof and walls were tottering, would you not flee from it as soon as possible? In this life everything threatens ruin to the soul — the world, the devils, the flesh, our passions, all would draw us to sin and eternal death. For this reason St. Paul exclaims: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Happy, then, are they who die in the Lord. For they escape from pains and toils and go to rest. At the hour of her death St. Catherine of Siena is said to have remarked to her Sisters in religion: "Rejoice with me, for I am leaving this land of suffering, and going to the kingdom of peace." Sacred Scripture confirms this attitude, for it frequently refers to the death of the saints as 'a sleep.'

THE words, "depart Christian soul, from this world," are a part of the Church's ritual in the administration of the sacrament of extreme unction. They are appalling to sinners at the hour of death, but hardly alarm the saints. The thought of being obliged to leave the goods of this earth does not disturb such a one,

for he has kept his soul detached from such things. During life he always regarded God as the Lord of his heart and as the sole source of riches. Nor is he concerned at the thought of leaving honors. For the only honor he sought was to love God and to be loved by God. Justly did he consider all the honors of this world to be but smoke and vanity.

The saintly man is not disturbed at the thought of leaving relatives, for he loved them only in God. In his last moments he recommends them to his heavenly Father, Who loves them more than he. And being assured of his own salvation, he hopes to be better able to assist his relatives from paradise than on this earth. Here on his deathbed, he verifies the words which he frequently repeated during his life: "My God and my all."

Nor do the physical pains of death disturb his mind. Realizing that he is now at the end of his life, and that he has no more time to suffer for God, the saintly man accepts these pains with joy. He offers them as another proof of love, in the last moments of his life. He unites his death with the death of Jesus Christ, offering it to the divine majesty.

The remembrance of the sins which he has committed will surely affect the just man, but it will not disturb or alarm him. For he is convinced that the Lord will forget the sins of all true penitents. The very sorrow which he feels for his sins assures him of paradise. He who detests his sins and offers his death to God in atonement for them, may rest assured that God has pardoned them.

**S**HOULD you be unwilling, at the hour of death, to pardon an enemy, or to restore what is not yours, or to put an end to an improper friendship — then tremble for your salvation. For you have reason to be afraid of death. But if you seek to avoid sin, and to preserve in your heart a testimony that you love God, you may be assured that He is with you. And if the Lord is with you, what do you fear? To offer your death to God is the most perfect act of love that it is possible to perform. For by cheerfully embracing death to please God, at the time and in the manner which God ordains, one becomes like a martyr. For the entire merit of martyrdom consists in suffering and dying to please God.

Death, also, has a higher consolation in this, that in it the soul will cease to offend God. It is impossible to live in this world without commit-

ting at least some slight faults. No man on this earth, no matter how holy he might be, is exempt from sins. St. Ambrose remarks that God permitted death to enter the world, that by dying men should cease to sin. It is a great mistake, therefore, to imagine that death is a chastisement for those who love God. Rather, it is a mark of the love which God bears to them. For he shortens their life to put an end to sin, from which they cannot be exempt as long as they remain on this earth.

Indeed, *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the saints*. Precious, for none can enter heaven to see God without first passing through the gate of death. Precious, in the reception of Jesus Christ in Holy Viaticum. Precious, in the remembrance of having served Mary faithfully during life.

#### IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS

Please notify us promptly of your change of address, giving both your old and new address. It makes it easy for our office if you cut your stenciled address from the rear cover of one of your issues of *The Liguorian* and send it in when asking for a change of address. Notify us by the tenth of the month if your copy for that month has not been delivered.

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#### LIGUORIAN BINDERS

We have had hard-cover binders made to order for holding 12 copies of *THE LIGUORIAN* in a single volume. Anyone can insert the issues in the binder. Those who preserve their copies of *THE LIGUORIAN* for reference will find the binders very handy, with the index always at the end of the December issue. Order binders from *The Liguorian*, Liguori, Mo., at \$2.50 each.

# BOOK REVIEWS

Thomas Tobin, C.S.S.R.

We recommend that books listed or reviewed in **THE LIGUORIAN** be purchased at your local bookstore. If you cannot obtain the book in that way, you may order the book from **THE LIGUORIAN, Liguori, Missouri.**

## **The Cypresses Believe in God**

Jose Maria Gironella

Translated by Harriet de Onis

This is one of the great Catholic novels of our generation. There are a number of external factors that point to this conclusion. The French publishers hurried to beat the original Spanish edition from the press; the American publishers hastened to assume the great expense of translating and publishing this thousand-page novel. In Spain Gironella's book received the national Literary Prize which is comparable to our Pulitzer prize; in the United States the Thomas More Association honored the publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, for making "the most distinguished contribution to Catholic publishing in 1955." Critics have ranged from being quite non-committal to placing the novel on the same shelf with *War and Peace*, *Kristin Lavransdatter* and *The Betrothed*.

What manner of novel is *The Cypresses Believe in God* to call forth such praise? Simply, and yet nothing Spanish is ever simple, it is the story of the five years that led up to the Civil War in Spain in 1936. These years are seen through the lives of the members of a middle class family, the Alvears: Matias, the father, who leans toward liberalism; Carmen, the mother, who is intensely Basque and more fervently Catholic; Ignacio, the law-student son, who watches the development of Spanish life and politics without making a definite decision; Cesar, the seminarian, who tries to counterbalance the weight of evil by personal charity and sacrifice; Pilar, the young daughter, who is deeply in love with the leader of the Falangists in her city. The novelist has great narrative skill in his ability to take something as complex as the Spanish scene and make it intelligible to readers. As he warns the readers in his preface, a Spanish Communist or Free Mason is not the international type but a Spaniard with a "tendency toward the instinctive, toward the individualistic, and toward the anarchic."

This is an objective presentation of the five years that led up to the Civil War. The author points out the conserv-

ative inactivity and hence injustice of the right as well as the destructive forces of the parties of the left. It would be a bit difficult to judge Gironella's personal views, but, perhaps, the two remaining volumes of the trilogy on the Civil War will reveal more clearly his viewpoint. To those of us who have difficulty in understanding the title, Gironella gives this explanation in a letter to the Thomas More Association. "In Spain, cypresses are the typical cemetery trees, and by my title, I wanted to express the idea that it is the cemeteries, in the end, which know the truth of our lives and which therefore have certitude and faith. The cypresses believe in God, as all of you believe, as I myself believe." He concludes his letter with an apology for the length of the novel: "I wanted to speak of the human heart and the human heart is so capacious that the book grew to two huge volumes." (The second edition is in one volume.)

The reviewer enjoyed immensely his novel and recommends it to our readers. Several passages restrict the book to adults. Those who read this first volume will eagerly await the writing and the translation of the other two volumes of the trilogy. Gironella's extraordinary narrative skill and knowledge of the human heart make the reader a spectator of the stirring events of the novel.

(Alfred A. Knopf, \$5.95)

#### **Girl in May**

Bruce Marshall

Friends of Bruce Marshall have repeatedly requested that he write a love story. *Girl in May* is the result. In a familiar Scottish scene Marshall tells the tale of two young lovers, their problems with others, the quarrels between themselves and the final parting which the reader already knows at the beginning of the novel because the flash-back technique is employed. The only character that has depth is the girl's father, Canon Dunwoodie, a lovable, patient and forgiving man. This novel is not up to the quality of Marshall's other books; nor does it capture anything of the spirit of young love which was so well expressed in Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer*. There are much better novels for the selective reader.

(Houghton Mifflin Co., \$3.00)

#### **Carmel, Mary's Own; Mary and the Saints of Carmel**

Father Gabriel N. Pausbach, translates the three pamphlets (\$.25 each) that contain a full history of the Carmelite Order.

Father Valentine L. Boyle has gathered reflections about *Mary and the Saints of Carmel*. (\$1.50.)

(Carmelite Press)

### **The Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard**

Etienne Gilson

Translated by A. H. C. Downes

In 1933 the eminent scholastic philosopher, Etienne Gilson of the College of France was asked by University College of Wales to give a series of lectures on some point of medieval history. He chose to talk on the basic principles of Cistercian mysticism. These lectures have served as the basis of **The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard** which seeks to prove that St. Bernard had a systematic mystical doctrine based on solid dogma and not merely a series of unrelated practical counsels. This scholarly book will appeal to students of medieval thought.

(Sheed and Ward, \$4.00)

### **A Right to Be Merry**

Sister Mary Francis, P.C.

In the midst of the books written by Sisters engaged in the active work of teaching or nursing it is about time that the world hear the voice of the contemplative nun. Sister Mary Francis, a Poor Clare nun of the Roswell, New Mexico, monastery, does a wonderful job in explaining life in a cloistered community. With singular appropriateness Sister Mary Francis selects the title from Our Lord's words to Margery Kempe, the anchoress of Lynn, that her enclosed life of union with Him gave Him the greatest satisfaction, and gave her, "as great a right to be merry as any lady in the world." Any non-Catholic who thinks that cloistered sisters are held captive, and any Catholic who has a lingering suspicion that only misfits and melancholic girls enter the cloistered orders should read this book. One of the humorous incidents that will impress the reader is the word-picture of the author as a novice practicing her entrance as a bride on her profession day. Unfamiliar with the problems of a bridal train, and two years away from high heels, she made many a stately walk down the novitiate corridor in high heels and swishing her train of bath towels behind her.

But this is fundamentally a serious book with a serious purpose: to state the case for the contemplative nun. It accomplishes this by explaining the daily life and the various vows and obligations assumed by the nuns. **A Right to Be Merry** is an excellent book that will help Catholics understand the contemplative life and will lead more girls to consider and follow this special call from God. It is indicative of the monastic respect for the individual person that this book was not written by an anonymous "Poor Clare" but by Sister Mary Francis.

(Sheed and Ward, \$3.00)

### **The Lamb**

**Francois Mauriac**

Xavier Dartigelongue is *The Lamb* who sacrifices himself for the salvation of two strangers, a man and his wife, who had separated from each other. A chance encounter on the train leads Xavier to abandon his journey to the seminary and follow Jean de Mirbel to his home. Filled with despair that he had not as yet saved one single person he dies under mysterious circumstances that lead Jean and his wife to believe that he sacrificed himself to bring them together again. Francois Mauriac reintroduces his readers to Brigitte Pian, *A Woman of the Pharisees*, and to her daughter and husband, but the story is that of Xavier. As is usual in the novels of Mauriac, the Nobel Prize winner, there is devious psychological probing and consummate literary skill. Those who like the gloomy and often pessimistic psychological novels of the French and who are admirers of Mauriac will enjoy *The Lamb*, which is not a great book, but a good one.

(Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, \$3.00)

### **Introduction to the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas III. Psychology**

**H. D. Gardeil, O.P.**

Translated by John A. Otto, Ph.D.

A prominent Thomistic philosopher, Rev. H. D. Gardeil, O.P., is the author of a four-volume text of philosophy. The first volume to be translated is the present work on **Psychology**. The subjects treated are the standard ones in a scholastic text; the method is clear and logical. A selection of texts from St. Thomas plus a good index add to the value of the book.

(Herder, \$4.00)

### **A Paris Surgeon's Story**

**Dr. Charles F. Bove, K.L.H.**

Between the two World Wars this Brooklyn-born doctor served as the chief surgeon of the American Hospital in Paris and under his scalpel passed the great and the near great on the international scene. In this book of memoirs, written in collaboration with Dana Lee Thomas, Dr. Bove recalls some of the incidents of which he was spectator and participant. Lindbergh, Pierre Laval, Hemingway, Aimee Semple McPherson and Ivor Kreuger are some well-known names that are encountered briefly in these pages. Of interest is the trip to Lourdes and the change in the author from an agnostic scientist to a man who believes in God and the soul. The pages devoted to the care of the sick during the early days of World War II are especially well done. Not a great book, but a pleasant companion for a few leisure hours.

(Little, Brown and Co., \$4.50)



**Be a Saint in Spite of Yourself** Marie C. Commins, M.A.

The great interest of the Church in the apostolic life of the layman has resulted in the writing of many books to assist the layman in his personal or apostolic life. The present book focuses the attention of the layman on various saints from all walks of life who became saintly in spite of great hindrances in their way. Miss Commins begins with the greatest traitor of all times — the man who betrayed our Lord for thirty pieces of silver and continues her work with brief insights into the lives of Sts. Dismas, Mary Magdalen, Jerome, Augustine, Margaret of Cortona and others. Well-written essays on the saints which produce the over-all effect that the sanctity which God demands of all is within the reach of all.

(Bruce, \$2.75.)



**The Holy Bible**

Translated by Monsignor Ronald A. Knox

Over ten years ago Monsignor Knox was commissioned by the English hierarchy to undertake a completely new translation of the Old and New Testaments. The translation was made from the "Latin Vulgate in the light of the Hebrew and Greek." This translation has been praised as both scholarly and readable. Perhaps the great virtue of the Knox Bible is its easy readability. There have been criticisms over certain passages, but, in general, it has been well received. This is a translation that makes the Bible intelligible and appealing and is very highly recommended for each home.

(Sheed and Ward, \$7.50)



**No Cross, No Crown**

Clement H. Crock

Father Clement H. Crock, the author of the well-known books of sermons, has now turned his pen to the eternal mystery of suffering. The first section of the book deals with many phases of suffering and possible means to bear with suffering; the second half treats of the life after death with the crown of glory as the full explanation of the cross of suffering. Both parts of the book are well done with insight into the problem. The chapters on heaven are very interesting because the treatment is much more complete than is ordinarily seen in a popular book. The information and reflections of **No Cross, No Crown** are recommended to all.

(Society of St. Paul, \$2.50)

# LUCID INTERVALS

Two ants were running at a great speed across a cracker box.

"Why are we going so fast?" asked one.

"Can't you read directions?" said the other. "It says: 'Tear along the dotted line.'"

A young lady was newly-married and was giving her first order to the grocer.

"I want five pounds of paralyzed sugar, two tins of condemned milk and a pound of desecrated codfish," she said.

He was a clever man and used to all kinds of orders so he wrote them all down without a flicker of a smile, and asked:

"Is that all, ma'am? We have some very nice horse-radish that just came in."

"That would be of no use to me," she replied, "We don't keep a horse."

Lawyer: "You say you were about thirty-five feet away from the scene. Just how far can you see clearly?"

Farmer: "Well, every morning when I wake up I see the sun and they tell me that it is about ninety-three million miles away."

"The new long-playing records aren't going over so good with the Russians."

"How come?"

"The Communists seem to prefer the old ones with 78 revolutions per minute."

"Do you think," asked one member of the audience, "that tonight's speaker put enough fire into his speech?"

"My opinion," was the reply, "is that he didn't put enough of his speech into the fire."

"Why is it that you carry only one plank while everyone else is carrying two?" the building foreman asked Slow Joe.

"I guess," drawled Slow Joe, "they're just too lazy to make two trips like I do."

Pat and Sandy went fishing. They agreed that the one who made the first catch would give the other a drink. After about ten minutes the Scotsman yelled:

"Hey, Pat, you got a bite!"

Pat yanked in his line, and sure enough there was a measly little fish. But Pat would keep his word so he poured his pal a drink.

"Ah, weel," said the Scotsman, wiping his lips, "I think noo I'll bait my hook."

A waitress asked a man what he wanted.

"I feel like a sandwich," he replied.

She answered: "Just give me your order. Don't blame me if the place is crowded."

A visitor had come to call and while waiting for the lady of the house to bring in some refreshments, chatted with the little boy.

"So you can count?" he said to the youngster. "That's fine. Let's hear you."

"Sure," said the child superciliously. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, jack, queen, king."

Reporter: "I'd like some advice, sir, on how to run a newspaper."

Editor: "You've come to the wrong person, son. Ask one of my subscribers."

## BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

### HEADLINERS

The Last Hurrah (IIa)—*O'Connor*  
 A Thing of Beauty (I)—*Cronin*  
 Andersonville (IIb)—*Kantor*  
 A Single Pebble (IIa)—*Hersey*  
 Imperial Woman (IIb)—*Buck*  
 Auntie Mame (IIa)—*Dennis*  
 A Walk on the Wild Side (IV)—*Algren*  
 The Rosemary Tree (IIa)—*Goudge*  
 Lucy Crown (IIb)—*Shaw*  
 Charmed Circle (IIa)—*Ertz*

### I. Suitable for general reading:

Half-Crown House—*Ashton*  
 Death in Retirement—*Bell*  
 A Report on the American Jesuits—*Bourke-White & La Farge*  
 The Spirit of Adventure—*Burnett*  
 Eisenhower: The Inside Story—*Donovan*  
 We Haven't Seen Her Lately—*Ferrars*  
 A Republican Looks at His Party—*Larson*  
 The Lyndon Johnson Story—*Mooney*  
 Gunlock—*Overholser*  
 The Mind Goes Forth—*Overstreet*  
 Let My Name Stand Fair—*Seifert*  
 St. Ignatius Loyola—*Von Matt & Rahner*  
 Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox—*Burns*  
 Surprise Endings—*Christie*  
 Franco of Spain—*Coles*  
 Old Yeller—*Gipson*  
 The Soviet Secret Services—*Heilbrunn*  
 The Itch of Opinion—*Lerner*  
 The Green Hills—*Macken*  
 The Republicans—*Moos*  
 A Family Party—*O'Hara*  
 Harm Intended—*Parker*  
 Beyond the Black Stump—*Shute*

### II. Suitable only for adults:

#### A. Because of advanced style and contents:

The Far Traveller—*Coles*  
 The Last of the Conquistadores—*Englebert*  
 The Crowning Privilege—*Graves*  
 Violent Truce—*Hutchison*  
 Afternoon of an Autocrat—*Lofts*  
 Small Venom—*Mole*  
 The Tudors—*Morris*  
 New Hope in Africa—*Oldham*  
 The Aristocrats—*St. Pierre*  
 Man in Search of His Ancestors—*Senet*  
 Policeman's Lot—*Soderman*  
 Italian Foreign Policy—*Villari*  
 The Bound Man—*Aichinger*  
 For Love of a King—*Alexandra*  
 A Tangled Web—*Blake*  
 The Marble Orchard—*Boylan*  
 Over the Bridge—*Church*  
 Critical Approaches to Literature—*Daiches*  
 Angel's Ransom—*Dodge*  
 I Am Julie—*Harris*  
 The Color of Green—*Kaufman*  
 Adam Michiewicz—*Mills*  
 Divided We Stand—*Sheehy*  
 The Three-Dimensional Man—*Sullivan*

#### B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:

Harvest on the Shore—*Carstens*  
 The Spiked Heel—*Marsten*  
 The Men in Her Death—*Ransome*  
 Amelie in Love—*Troyat*

### III. Permissible for the discriminating adult:

Portable Age of Reason Reader—*Brinton*  
 The Straight and Narrow Path—*Tracy*  
 The Vicarious Years—*Van Druen*

### IV. Not recommended to any reader:

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 Lady Sings the Blues—*Holiday & Dufty*

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